



CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT
By Alan Green

SEAFLY NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL BUMPER AUTUMN 1980 EDITION

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Boats for Sale

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CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT

By Alan Green.

After an absence of five years the National Championships returned to Plymouth this year where we were hosted by the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club who were able to provide much better racing than we enjoyed on the last two visits. Olympic courses were laid in Plymouth Sound with mile long legs providing races lasting upwards of two hours. With on-shore winds generally between force two and five all the week there were none of the sudden shifts when the wind blows off the land which we experienced in the past and this time even the tides did not seem to play such a big part since there was always enough wind to keep sailing. Nevertheless, there were opportunities for those who had studied their charts carefully to gain a handsome advantage.

Although the entry of 36 was not as good as the record of 49 in 1975, it was better than last year, being boosted by nine boats from Starcross just up the coast. Highcliffe provided seven boats, Worthing six, Seasalter five, Blakeney four, South Cerney two and Chew Valley Lake, Hunstanton, and Fishers Green one each. Now that the Starcross fleet has flexed its muscles against the rest of the class it is to be hoped that they have got the taste for competition and will be seen at Opens and the Nationals in future.

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CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT Cont'd.....

Regrettably some of the regular faces were missing: Bill Prescott and Terry Smitherman from Seasalter, Brian Blogg and Matt Hambling from Blakeney, and Harry Leigh from Worthing. They have supported the class for many years and hopefully will be seen again another year. Stan Walton was in support on shore; we missed him on the water.

The Championships were dominated by three crews who took the first three places in nearly every race. Morris Arthur and Brian Cooper from Blakeney sailing C279 'Iceni', now more than 10 years old, showed everyone that it was not necessary to have the latest hull to succeed, and with their Seahorse sails rigged on Boyce spars proved a winning combination, repeating their success when they first burst upon the Seafly scene in 1971.

Runners-up for the second year running were Matthew Gray and his father Peter from Chew Valley Lake in their fibreglass boat C523 'Kangablue' - there is talk of them moving up to a 5-0-5 next year, which will be a loss to the class. Third were David Black and Bill Rabbetts in C451 'Manuel' from Highcliffe. Behind these three came another group of 4 or 5 boats which had nearly as much boat speed and these leading boats usually opened up a considerable gap over we lesser mortals making it difficult for your reporter to record what went on up at the sharp end.

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CHAMPION REPORT (Cont)

Sunday's Practice race was sailed in fairly light conditions and caught out a few who had failed to study their sailing instructions regarding the start line; four were over and disqualified. With two non-starters and three retirements, 27 boats were placed. David Black was the winner from Mathew Gray and John Lloyd in C420 from Starcross was third.

Monday's weather forecast for the Sussex Salver promised force 5 to 6 with very poor visibility, but by the start at 1.30 pm the wind had eased to force 4 gusting 5 from the south west, encouraging several waverers to go afloat. A minute before the start the Answering Pendant was hoisted when a rescue boat broke down and the delay lasted half an hour before the race was started. Among the nine non-starters were Erik and Hannah Arthur from Blakeney in C288 "Sea Griffin" who had the misfortune to capsize during the postponement and bent their mast. At the windward mark Matthew Gray led from David Black with John Slater and John Hartley from Highcliffe third in C624 'Sious'.

CHAMPION REPORT (Cont)

Those positions were unchanged at the finish by which time six boats had retired, some with damage including B. Young from Highcliffe in C459 'Cherokee' who ended up on the rocks near Jennycliffe.

For the Lucas Cup on Tuesday the wind had eased to force 3 to 4 from west south west. Last year's champion Colin May and Dave Smith from Highcliffe sailing the same foam sandwich boat C622 'Also Amazing' was first at the windward mark, followed by Morris Arthur and Matthew Gray, but Morris subsequently passed Colin, leaving Matthew third.

On Wednesday the forecast was for force 4 to 6, but at the start it was a pleasant 3 from the south west which unfortunately fell away to 2 or less and backed, turning the beat leg into a fetch and the race, for the Chairman's Cup, had to be terminated after the third beat, for the only time during the week. At the windward mark Morris Arthur led from John Slater and Matthew Gray; Morris held his lead to win for the second day running. David Black was second and Matthew Gray third.

CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT (Cont)

Thursday dawned with the cloud base down to about 100 feet, a thick drizzle and mist reducing visibility to almost nil. The local radio forecast a heavy belt of rain coming up from the west and by the time the fleet went afloat for the 1.30 pm start it had arrived! However a steady force 3 to 4 from the south east promised good sailing, but first everyone had to sit out a half-hour delay while a large ship loomed out of the gloom into the middle of the course to be taken in tow by tugs. Eventually the race for the Herbert Trophy got away, with everyone by now wet and cold and glad to get started. At the first mark Matthew Gray, David Black and Morris Arthur were in the lead, but by the finish David and Morris had passed Matthew.

So for the final race on Friday for the City of Plymouth Cup Morris Arthur with $3\frac{1}{2}$ points after discard held a narrow lead over David Black with $4\frac{3}{4}$ points and Matthew Gray with $6\frac{3}{4}$ and any of them could win the Championship.

CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT (Cont)

The forecast was light and variable, but by the time of the earlier start at 11.30 am the wind had settled to a steady force 2 to 3 from the south south west which backed to south south east, and for the first time since Sunday the sun came out. In the changed tidal conditions and wind direction it paid to tack downwind towards Drakes Island where a favourable tidal stream gave an advantage of four or five hundred yards. At the windward mark Matthew Gray led from Morris Arthur and Colin May and the first two held their positions to the gun with David Black in third place. Morris Arthur's second was enough to give him the Championship and Matthew Gray's second win of the week took him into second overall by $\frac{1}{4}$ point from David Black. Highcliffe took the Canberra Trophy for the best three boats from one club on a points basis.

So ended another very successful Seafly week enjoyed by all who took part. This year we shared the venue with 21 Sprints (formerly Mini-Sprints) and the combination worked very well with little contention on the water.

CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT (Cont)

Although the weather was dismal for the wives and children, the competitors had enjoyed a good week's sailing, and at least the weather was warm. The Royal Plymouth Corinthian Y.C. laid on a full social programme, including a boat trip up the Tamar one evening, and for those who preferred to sit out the disco after the prize giving there was the club balcony on a warm and balmy evening to round off the week with reminiscences and good company.

OVERALL RESULTS:-

- 1st C279 'Iceni' (Morris Arthur & Brian Cooper, Blakeney S.C.) 5½ pts.
- 2nd C523 'Kangablue' (Matthew & Peter Gray, Chew Valley Lake S.C.) 7½ pts.
- 3rd C451 'Manuel' (David Black & Bill Rabbetts, Highcliffe S.C.) 7¾ pts.
- 4th C624 'Sioux' (John Slater & John Hartley, Highcliffe S.C.) 17 pts.
- 5th C622 'Also Amazing' (Colin May & Dave Smith, Highcliffe S.C.) 20 pts.

OVERALL RESULTS:- (Cont)

6th C288 'Sea Griffin' (Erik & Hannah Arthur,
Blakeney S.C.) 21 pts.

7th C69 'Soixante Neuf' (Alasdair & John McPherson,
Highcliffe S.C.) 25 pts.

8th C620 'Mischief Maker' (Jim Furlong & Bob Risbridger
Seasalter S.C.) 30 pts.

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WORTHING OPEN

By Alan Green

Worthing's Open Meeting, shared with a large Dart fleet, was sailed in excellent conditions, although the entry was a little disappointing. With several local boats unable to compete it needed five visitors from Highcliffe and one from Seasalter to make up a reasonable number and we were not quite lost among the 48-strong Dart entry.

Saturday's race was sailed over an Olympic course in a force 4-5 westerly wind and big seas providing exciting planing on the reaches. First to the windward mark were David Black sailing C451 'Manuel' and Alasdair McPherson in C69 'Soixante Neuf', from Highcliffe, followed by Dave Stewart from the home club in C119 'Pink Ticket'. Colin May, Highcliffe, in C622 'Also Amazing' who had started late, soon powered through under spinnaker to take second place at the gun from David Black with Alasdair McPherson third.

WORTHING OPEN (Cont)

On Sunday the wind had eased to force 3 to 4. The morning race saw another Highcliffe visitor, John Slater in C624 'Sioux' up with the leaders but he was unable to catch David Black who scored another first to win the meeting and the Colbourne Cup. Peter Scovell of Worthing in C492 'Mantis' was third. The same Olympic course was sailed in the afternoon, but it was shortened after the second lap in deteriorating conditions. In the absence of David Black, John Slater stepped into first position, Alasdair McPherson was second and Peter Scovell third.

OVERALL RESULTS:-

- 1st C452 'Manuel' (David Black & Bill Rabbetts, Highcliffe S.C.) 1½ pts.
- 2nd C624 'Sioux' (John Slater & John Hartley, Highcliffe S.C.) 2¾ pts.
- 3rd C69 'Soixante Neuf' (Alasdair & John McPherson, Highcliffe S.C.) 5 pts.
- 4th C492 'Mantis' (Peter & Steve Scovell, Worthing YC) 6 pts.
- 5th C119 'Pink Ticket' (Dave Stewart & Ray Ditch, Worthing YC) 10 pts.
- 6th C506 'Will Power' (Fred & Alison Williams, Seasalter S.C.) 11 pts.

'SUPERLATIVES'

By 1980 National Champion
Morris Arthur.

"A helmsman is accredited with winning a National Championship. This is not unreasonable. One boat is said to be faster than another. The builder is Accredited. One sail is said to be better than another. The Sailmaker is accredited. One mast is said to be stiffer, or is it softer or is it bendier? Soft is used disparagingly, bend used to imply good qualities. Crews are usually blamed. This year at Plymouth a special award was made, for the first time, to "The Most Amazing Crew". Of all the charecteristics remarked upon, so far this selection of an amazing crew could not have been more appropriate. Let me give you some examples. It is an hour before the start of the final race. We are the best placed to win the series, but two other crews are close enough to stand a real chance. I look across the dinghy park and practice those disciplines I've learned to control the adrenalin, which is beginning to enter my blood stream.

'SUPERLATIVES' (Cont)

Black looks too relaxed. I would have been a little happier if he showed some sign of tension. Gray looks organised and busy. Brian begins to haul up the mainsail. He pauses, turns to me with a smile and says "The halyard messenger has broken". A slight flicker betrays his otherwise total composure. A Gary Cooper film of the 40's flashes through my memory at 2,000 frames per second. "Say that again and smile..." "With a gun against my belly I always smile". From the corner of my eye I see Black making for the ramp. Gray lifts the handle of his trolley. Through a tight throat I croak "We can tie it to the mast head". Brian ignores my remark contemptuously. He turns to his tool kit which has previously been placed exactly 4'.10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " to the right hand side with its handle raised by the thickness of the thickest finger. It's lid clasp faces the boat. Brian's hand dips in once with the speed of a dipper. Instead of a gold watch and chain he returns with a coil of curtain wire and a coil of brand new halyard messenger. The boat cover which has laid next to the tool box is moved to a special position. Within a minute the boat is on its side.

'SUPERLATIVES' (Cont)

All around boats are racing to be first down the ramp. Forty thousand years of "Last man into the cave gets eaten" conspires to fill their senses with fear. Now its "First man down the slip could be mistaken for a mini sailor" !!

Now I realize why our boat is parked where it is. On its side with its mast close to the ground we occupy perhaps 20% of the free space, yet we are not in the way. Halfway through the operation, I notice Brian's hand tremble a little. It seems like a good time to check the bottom of the boat. Of course its clean and smooth. Brian has pushed two drawing pins into the front of the centre-board gaskets. With a shock I see my expression in the polished bottom. Brian has finished. We are at the bottom of the slip. Brian has disappeared. When he returns I know better than to question him. I suspect he has nipped into the Mayflower to brush his hair. A little boy leans over the railings above, points at us and says "Dad is that a minisail there?" As we push off to the start Erik and Hanna pass us going the other way. Their faces are graphic. "Did we forget anything Brian"?

'SUPERLATIVES' (Cont)

Brian smiles confidently. "Have 2.43 ounces of Kendal mint cake seven minutes and 30 seconds before the start in order to give you energy", he replies.

It was at Lowestoft when I first began to realise Brian's true qualities, beating to windward, wind against tide, chop at the harbour mouth. The boat would leave the back side of a wave and crash into the trough. I heard the plywood crack under the impact. I beat Brian's chest with the back of my left hand and screamed. "More power, more power"! That part of my mind still under control said to me "You are making a fool of yourself!" Ashore I apologised to Brian. His face smiled. He said "I was getting a bit cold at the time and actually it helped warm me up".

Now at the end of a long race, as we approach the finish and other crews are resolving never to sail again for the idiot at the helm, I can say to Brian, "tighten the jib sheet about half an inch" and then watch with fascination as the sheet tightens just so much.

'SUPERLATIVES' (Cont)

"Ease it off an inch" Immediately it eases, no need to wait until Brian releases the jamb cleats. He has removed them as redundant.

First find a supercrew, then find a crew who prepares a superboat, then find a supercrew who prepares a superboat and who will not allow you to put it to bed, who records the adjustments and enters the boat, and trails the boat, reminds you to sign off, provides the Kendal Mint cake and the course cards. Then you too will have an amazing crew...."

MORRIS ARTHUR

1980 A.G.M.

One of the best attended and business like meetings for some years was attended by about 40 members at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club on Thursday, August 15th.

The meeting again tackled the subject of builders and the need to licence more if the class was to develop. After hearing that the wood builder Dick Flower appeared to have ceased business it was unanimously agreed that permission be sought from Arthur Edmunds of Zygol Boats (the holder of the Seafly building rights) to licence additional wood builders. Moore's of Wroxham was suggested as one possible builder having had experience of building Seaflys in the 1970s. It was stressed that the appointment of additional builders should in no way prevent Dick Flower's former partner, Martin Creasey, from building in wood if a licence could be obtained from Arthur Edmunds.

1981 Nationals

Worthing Y.C. had agreed to stage the 1981 championships in August but Alan Green said Worthing had since been approached by the Dart "cat" class with a view to sharing the date and venue. Everyone felt the logistics of sharing with a big "cat" fleet - possibly up to 100 boats - was not acceptable.

It was unanimously agreed that the championships should be held at Worthing but only on the clear understanding that the Seaflys were not prepared to share with the Darts. Alan Green has since reported that the Darts had now decided to go elsewhere and that the Worthing Club had anyway decided that they would honour their long standing commitment to the Seaflys. At the moment there were no plans to hold the championships with another class.

Rules Clarification

Peter Gray explained that he had re-written the rule book with the object of clarifying the rules and not to change them. He hoped the revised document would now be more helpful and easier to understand and acceptable to the RYA. Peter Scovell (Worthing) welcomed the revision but thought there had been some changes with regard to measurements which needed first to be discussed and approved constitutionally at the next AGM. Peter Gray said he was prepared to serve on the committee until the revised document was completed. The meeting accepted the document subject to the amendments suggested by Peter Scovell being incorporated in the final document which would be presented for approval at the 1981 AGM.

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720 Rule

Following the discovery that the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club had refused permission to operate the "720 rule" during the championships because it was not in the class rules the meeting unanimously agreed the following resolution for inclusion in class rules: "Under Appendix III of the RYA racing rules a helm may exonerate himself/herself from an infringement during the national championships or open meetings staged by the Seafly Dinghy Class Association by executing two 360 degree turns."

Subscription Increase

After a report from Treasurer Vic Birtles that members had long been subsidizing the running of the class out of their own pockets it was unanimously agreed that the subscriptions be increased from £2 to £4 for full members and £1 to £2 for associate members. The treasurer, in his report, said the association had ended the year with more money than it had started (a balance of £425) but this had been due to "some involuntary sponsorship" by a certain employer. The increased revenue was essential to cover true administration costs and enable the association to be self-supporting and expand.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Vic Birtles said after last year's disastrous effort at the National Dinghy Exhibition this year's had been a great success. The stand was one of the best in the exhibition, considering the size of the class. Two boats had been displayed - Brian Blogg's new wood boat and Colin May's GRP foam sandwich prototype.

A successful advertising campaign in Yachts & Yachting had also attracted much interest in the class, promoting the boat, the builders and the association. He hoped it would be repeated.

The Secretary made a strong plea for members to pay back some of the pleasure and enjoyment they had had out of the class by helping to run the association instead of leaving a few people to shoulder the burden.

Officers & Committee

Mike Robinson (South Cerney) was elected secretary and his father Wilf agreed to serve as treasurer. Bob Risebridger (Seasalter) also offered to take over as Newsletter editor after this edition.

The following committee members were elected:

Peter Gray, Colin May, Vic Birtles, and Bob Risebridger.

All correspondence and subscriptions should now be addressed to Mike Robinson at "Green Beeches", Hornbury Hill, Minety, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. Tel: (home) Minety (066-640) 394 and (work) Swindon 22201.

SEAFLY SCENE (at Blakeney Open)

After the punishing 5-6 flog around a big course on the Saturday at the Blakeney Open it took a supreme effort to summon up strength for the evening's festivities, especially after a heavy lunchtime session in the Blakeney Bar. Trendy pipe smoking Highcliffe helm Ian Mansfield was so tired he fell asleep in the bath at Vic Birtles' home. After no signs of apparent life for two hours Birtles became concerned. Failing to rouse the Highcliffe lad he was about to shoulder through the door when Mansfield "surfaced". As one wit remarked: "After surviving six capsizes at Blakeney it would have been a tragedy for a Seafly helm to drown unceremoniously in his tub!"

P.S. Birtles has since insisted that all visitors to his bathroom wear personal buoyancy aids!

SEAFLY SCENE Cont'd.....

Seasalter S.C. are hoping for a possible 20 boat Open Meeting on September 13-14. Accommodation has generously been provided by several members including Fred Williams and Brian Howe who have offered to loan their caravans. Racing is at 2 p.m. on the Saturday with two races on the Sunday starting at 2.30 p.m.

The traditional Seasalter hospitality will also include a disco on the Saturday night in the splendid new clubhouse.

South Cerney also extend a warm invitation to visitors to their Open on Sunday, October 12. There are three races starting at 11 a.m. South Cerney is situated between Cirencester and Swindon in Wiltshire. Details on racing and accommodation can be obtained from committee man Jim Wren on Malmesbury (0662-62) 2861. Ext. 337.

A welcome new member to the Seafly fleet is novice Michael Pegg who lives at 4, North Park, Fakenham, in Norfolk. Mike has become a full member and is one the look-out for a boat. He is hoping to buy Terry Smitherman's boat at Seasalter. Mike plans to sail at Blakeney and would welcome any help and advice to get him on the water as soon as possible. An opportunity to crew would be greatly appreciated.

Cont'd...

SEAFLY SCENE Cont'd.....

Ian Mansfield who sailed No. 71 (see Boats for Sale) has bought Colin May's GRP foam sandwich boat No. 622. Ian, who sails at Highcliffe, says he is delighted with the boat and is planning a full season's racing next year. One of the useful novelties included in the deal was a length of large bore plastic drainpipe on which to roll up the main. The sail, which is first tied to each end, is then neatly furled around the pipe and covered with a bag which also holds the jib.

Youngest "visitor" at the Blakeney Open was Dave and Clare Scovell's new baby son Sebast'ian. The young "Seb", who already has a vice-like tiller grip, was so bored with the revellers in the noisy Blakeney Bar that he slept through the entire lunchtime session in his carry cot on a bar table only to awake when the landlord called "time". Dave and Clare are now happily settled in their new home near Norwich where Dave works for accountants Peat Marwick. Both are planning to return to the Seafly racing scene next year and Dave is planning a "comeback" at the Seasalter Open - while young Seb hopefully catches up on some shuteye!

SEAFLY SCENE Cont'd.....

Repeated cry heard from worried helm under capsized boat at Blakeney Open in a screaming force 5: "Is there anyone there?" Nimble centreboard acrobat Dave Scovell (son of veteran Seaflyer Peter) crewing for the worried Birtles hadn't abandoned ship and eventually hauled both boat and Birtles upright to continue the race.

Rip van Winkle Ian Mansfield is believed to be the first Seafly helm to have capsized his boat - on GRASS: While negotiating the nightmare Morston creek out to the start at Blakeney he strayed onto the flooded marshes. Ian disappeared into a "black hole" about 10ft deep while crew Martin was left high and dry on the marshes.

Seen hurtling across Morston creek, lone helmsman in Seafly. The bottomless "black holes" had claimed yet another victim - valient crew attempting to push his boat out of difficulties and finding himself stranded as the boat stormed up the creek with its horrified lone skipper. Birtles strikes again!

Cont'd...

SEAFLY SCENE Cont'd.....

Lost and found. One Peter Storm buoyancy aid - large size.
Please contact Brian Howe, Maidstone 59685.

1980 Champion crew Brian Cooper is the first recipient of the
new Amazing Crew Cup donated by GRP builder Colin May.

Probable date for 1981 Nationals at Worthing likely to be August
16-21 with starts beginning at 11 a.m. and finishing on the last
day at 1.30 p.m. This means launches will be at half tide on
the sand.

All contributions for the next Newsletter should be addressed
to the new editor Bob Risebridger (Seasalter) at 88 High Street,
Milton Regis, Sittingbourne, Kent, Tel: 0795-77032

Ejected verbally from the members bar at the Royal Plymouth
Corinthian Yacht Club at the Nationals was an understandably
very angry Stan Walton, Seasalter flag officer and Seafly
stalwart. "I've been thrown out of better places than this,"
said Stan who was later approached by obviously embarrassed
Corinthian officials who enlisted his help as a race
communications officer.

SEAFLY REMINISCENCES...

Seasalter helm Brian Howe recalls some of the earlier Nationals with his brother John, one of the Seafly's longest serving partnerships.

"Our Seafly sailing started at Seasalter S.C. in 1967 - Frostbite Series", with Seafly No.35 "Papadum", a very well known number from the Highcliffe past cards when owned by Bob Pike. It was fitted with transom sheeting, wooden mast, standard Lucas sails and a Spinnaker in our laundry basket! I believe we were the sixth Seasalter Seafly, which enabled us to race as a class, rather than General Handicap.

We entered our first Nationals in 1969 at Highcliffe S.C. their Clubhouse is those days was an old naval destroyer, called "Sea Vixen" moored on the mud near the present Clubhouse site. Valerie and I have some very clear memories of our first Nationals. To our great surprise we were first to the windward mark in the first championship race.

SEAFLY REMINISCENCES (Cont)

However, we ended up the week at the backend of the fleet, along with our good friend Brian Blogg, who became National Champion in 1976 at Worthing (I'm still trying!!) The Championship was infact won by George Kennet, in No 107. Few Seaflyes used spinnakers in those days, other than on the runs. The first person I raced using a spinnaker for reaching was Bob Houghton in the Nationals at Seasalter in 1970, when he won the Championship.

The Championships held at Plymouth in 1971 were won by Morris Arthur and Brian Cooper, in Mistral No 205. One or two boats were starting to use primitive forms of spinnaker chutes, and I can remember Brian Cooper carefully dusting his spinnaker with talcum powder, so it would slide more easily from his Mark 1 chute.

The early development of the spinnaker chute in our class was thanks to Harry Venables, who made a wooden mould and loaned it out for a small donation to the association. He was also the first person to reshape the forward buoyancy into the now familiar blister tank.

SEAFLY REMINISCENCES (Cont)

1971 - This was the first of the ten years my brother John crewed for me in the Championships, and we still talk about the Plymouth reaching start to Drakes Island buoy, with the fleet being divided by an enormous Royal Navy battleship, and our fantastic plane from one end of the Sound to the other in 'Papadam'.

The centremain started to become more popular in the class around 1973-74. I fitted one to my new South Devon GRP Seafly No 460 .. 'Howzat' in 1974. Certainly nearly all the leading boats in the Championship were using centremain in one form or another.

One could go on about the Seafly and the National Championship winners, however it is not just the Champion, it is the thirty five or so other boats, with their helms, crews and their families. These altogether make the "Seafly Week" one they no not want to miss".

BRIAN HOWE

STARCROSS OPEN

By Jim Fricker

"Overcast skies and fresh blustery north-west winds saw the start of the Starcross Open Meeting on the 19th and 20th July, 1980 with the competitors from Worthing and Highcliffe Sailing Clubs taking part.

The General conditions favoured Committee Boat starts in order to make the best possible use of wind and limited water.

The first race consisted of 14 boats, 13 of which started on a starboard tack. One (222) started on port and after negotiating the rest of the fleet, turned up second boat at the first mark.

The fresh gusty wind gave plenty of thrills for the spectators. Places changed frequently throughout the race which lasted for four rounds of a channel course.

The last mark on the last round caused a bit of trouble to some helmsmen and various right of way rules had to be sorted out by way of protest.

STARCROSS OPEN (Cont)

Local helm John Baker (223) finished **first** with yours truly, second and John Lloyd (420) third.

The skies were again overcast for the second race but with a promise to clear later in the day. With the wind north-west Force 2-3 increasing, 19 boats started this race against difficult wind changes and tide conditions.

The Highcliffe visitors Dave Black and Colin May took the lead with veteran John Baker (Starcross) chasing well.

Place changes were frequent with great holes in the wind and planing conditions in other places.

Most helmsmen in this race felt the extremes of ferocious exhilarating speed and the doldrums within a distance of half a mile. Still that's the Exe and local sailors didn't have it all their own way! Colin May won by working the wind shifts in the first place and leaving the tidal considerations secondary. His arch-rival Dave Black came second with John Baker third.

STARCROSS OPEN (Cont)

The third race was sailed on Sunday afternoon in very strong windy conditions. 19 boats started, 9 of which retired, some with broken gear, some after vicious capsizings and one even turned right over and put it's mast 3 ft. into the bottom of the Exe. This boat was retrieved after the meeting by a hearty salvage crew. Fortunately, the boat was found to be easily repairable after it's ordeal, which speaks highly of the general construction of the "Seafly".

This race developed into a battle between old rivals Dave Black who came first, and Colin Way, second, persued by Jim Fricker in third place. Real hairy planning with chutes aflyng on the down wind runs. Then it was down chutes and a broad reach across the river from number 27-25 buoys with sparke s flying off the keels before the slog to windward back to the up-river mark. The overall winner was Dave Black who although had the same points as runner-up Colin May a second and a first came out top based on the best final position. John Baker was third, and yours truly fourth.

STARCROSS OPEN (Cont)

Overall the meeting was a great success and Starcross was very pleased to be able to provide an interesting sailing venue for the visitors from Worthing and Highcliffe Sailing Clubs.

We seemed to have it all at Starcross, thrills, spills, old rivalries, expertise and the meeting of old friends over a pint and food.

The Seafly Fleet at Starcross extend their sincere thanks and gratitude to the race organisers for the efficient way in which the races were run and for staying afloat for hours in such conditions, faithfully scrutinising the progress of the races.

Hot soup and good food sustained the crews between races and we extend our thanks to the ladies of the galley.

I personally hope that the success of this meeting will encourage Starcross Yacht Club members to visit other clubs and so help further the Seafly Class in future!

JIM FRICKER

BLAKENEY OPEN

By Vic Birtles.

Almost a wipe out. That summed up the weather which greeted 12 Seaflys and Twenty Javelins at the joint open meeting at the North Norfolk club.

A strong force 6 - with gusts of eight - saw plenty of capsizes. Even champion Morris Arthur and crew Brian Cooper got a soaking when Brian's head got in the way of the boom on a gybe. But the pair were soon up and away again to overtake the leading three boats and come in first with Alistair and John McPherson (Highcliffe) second, and Frank Bassett (Blakeney) finally finishing third after several boats missed out a mark.

With an equally rough ride promised on the Sunday fear coupled with exhaustion saw only three starters, with a couple more who braved the elements but failed to make the gun. Roy Perryman (Blakeney) crewed by Erik Arthur, made a welcome return to the Seafly scene and showed he had lost none of his flare by building up a comfortable lead. Roger Beavis (Blakeney) finished second and Frank Bassett's third gave him the two results to become overall winner.

It was worth noting that on the Saturday most of the Seaflys hoisted spinnakers and completed the long gruelling course but only one of the big Javelin fleet put up a kite and at one stage the distance mark resembled a dinghy park with upturned boats and crews making navigation perilous.

Cont'd...

BLAKENEY OPEN Cont'd.....

Visitors included a disappointed Peter Scovell and Dave Stewart from Worthing, who didn't get a sail, and Ian Mansfield from Highcliffe. The vicious tide and wind in Morston creek will remain in the memory for a long time and although the racing was a disaster for some the social side made up for the disappointment.

PLYMOUTH 80

A lady's view

The Seafly Newsletter welcomes its first article from one of its lovely ladies, Seasalter's Valerie Howe who like so many of the Seafly wives provides that essential back-up operation behind the helms and crews who compete in national championships and open meetings. In the following article she captures the family spirit that epitomises the Seafly class.

"Straight along the M4 and down the M5 - no messing about" Fred's route to Plymouth proved very easy in just over five hours driving from Maidstone. As always we enjoyed our week and would like to say a few "Thankyous":-

To Vic for his organisation of the campsite - the first where we have actually had showers and hot water on site and Tumble Driers - much used this year if only to melt sailing suits!

To Hanna, Erik and Lisa for being so pleased to see us when we arrived after a very damp first week in their tent.

To Louise for her birthday barbecue in the rain - a dozen smiling, rainsoaked children, not one saying how wet it was, playing for well over an hour as if it were a beautiful summer's evening.

PLYMOUTH 80 (Cont)

To Stan for helping the Beachmaster and keeping us ladies informed of the various positions of our men in the races.

To Grace for her watchful eye on the children in the swimming pool and on the trip to Drake's Island.

To Dr John Lloyd from Starcross who reassured me that my insect bite wasn't as bad as it looked.

To Morris and Brita for their good humour after what must have been a big let-down in not having the right weather to sail 'Pipedream' to Plymouth in time.

To Alan and Sheila Izzard and family for just being there - it wouldn't be the same without them.

To Joyce, my sister-in-law, for organising all her family once again to be there and for doing my washing for me one rainy evening.

To Monica and Roger's crew's wife Debbie, for showing us all that it is possible to look really glamorous on a camp-site.

To John for crewing for the 10th year running and to Brian and John for doing the best they have ever done.

To All the children for getting on so well together and making the holiday so enjoyable in spite of the rain.

And to everyone else in the Seafly Fleet!! "

VALERIE HOWE

BOATS FOR SALE

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