



SEAFLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1986

## FROM THE EDITORS

Although not mentioned in the notes from the Class Secretary, the Association will be making up the entry fees for a low turnout at the Nationals at Seasalter this year. This could result in a hefty increase in subs. for the next season and of course, this need not happen if we get enough entries.

As a fleet we can show well over 30 boats for a championship, and this number is ideal for a successful week. As Alan says, Seasalter is a good place to sail, sheltered and flat waters, with easy launching and recovery. It is now also much more accessible with the opening of the M.25 section down to Reigate from the M.3 and this route cuts more than an hour off the journey time.

Although not a traditional seaside holiday resort the families of the sailors all seem to enjoy the week, due to the atmosphere and welcome of SSC members, so please give it a try this year—I'm sure you won't regret it.

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I was rather disappointed that as yet, no one has felt able to take up the role of Press Officer for the Association. We will have lost many of the opportunities for this year, but someone picking it up now would ensure that not all was lost for '86 and an excellent start for '87. Please contact David Cotgrove or Alan Green if you feel you would like to have a go.

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At the beginning of this year I indicated to the Committee that I would not be continuing with the Newsletter after the AGM this year. After three years as joint editor of the Newsletter—I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the contributors during this period and all those behind the scenes who print, staple together, write envelopes and stick on stamps. Keep up the good work.

### *DON'T MISS*

#### **THE HIGHCLIFFE OPEN/SEAFLY 25th ANNIVERSARY**

**Saturday and Sunday, 26th/27th July at Highcliffe Sailing Club.**  
Four races. First race starts at 12 noon on Saturday.

**Saturday Social with Band/Barbecue/Booze.**

Bring the wife and kids.—Have a great weekend.—Don't forget the crew as well.

One of the biggest problems in taking families to Open meetings is accommodation, and the problems involved with "tenting it" add to an already frantic weekend. However, Highcliffe Seafly sailors have volunteered beds in many cases, so any families wishing to come for the weekend can probably be put up provided they let us know early enough.

Contact: Ron Cockwell, Fleet Captain on Ringwood (04254) 6749, or Barry Thomas, Verwood (0202) 826426.

Let us know how many adults/children will be coming and we'll try to fix you up.

BARRY THOMAS.

## HIGHCLIFFE S.C.

Rather like last year, a poor start to the season weatherwise, with the whole Easter regatta blown out, and several days since. The cold weather after Easter caused more retirements than breezes picking up from moderate to strong, only Eskimos staying the course.

Few Seaflyes have really shown their (blue) noses regularly out on the water yet, with the family groups dominating the scene; Mansfields, McPhersons, Cockwells, Hughes and Thomases, with Stan Stubbs and Colin May completing the turn-out for racing. Unfortunately we haven't made it all together yet!

My personal weather forecaster (a drunken yokel down at the local) assures me of a 1976-type Summer starting early June. I hope he's right!

BARRY THOMAS.

## NEWS FROM STARCROSS

Last year's Seafly upturn at Starcross seems all set to continue with our fleet steadily gaining strength. The latest boat to swell the fleet is 404, formally belonging to Adrian Summers of Highcliffe and now sailed—very quickly—by Ken and Marie Bartlett. Welcome to the class Ken and Marie—you'll find a Seafly much dryer than a Lark!

After a slow start to the season due to the weather, the recent warmer (well a bit warmer) weather is now producing fleets of up to twelve boats on the line with still several regulars missing. In total I've calculated that Starcross should be able to produce about eighteen regular boats if everyone turns up at the same time. Last year's virtual walkover by Carol Lanham and John Baker seems to have had a hiccup this year as two other boats have joined her at the front of the fleet. Ken and Marie Bartlett in 404 are showing tremendous form and Alan Brook in 183—now with everything new, courtesy of his insurance company, is also showing out front at times. Everyone seems to be very keen with much talk of new systems and new sails. We hope it continues and spreads to some of the other fleets who might be struggling.

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The Starcross Open is on 28th/29th June and we hope all our regular visitors will join us again, plus any newcomers who would like a sail in the West Country—you'll be sure of a warm welcome.

## NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

Alan Green, "South Cones", 10 Higher Warren Road, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 1LG.  
Telephone Kingsbridge (0548) 2972.

### 1. 1986 Open Meetings

| <i>Date</i>         | <i>Club</i>       | <i>Times of Races (as notified)</i>                              |
|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| 7th/8th June        | Blakeney S.C.     | Sat. 1900 hrs<br>Sun. 0730 hrs—2 races                           |
| 28th/29th June      | Starcross Y.C.    | Sat. Practice race 1100 hrs. 1st race 1330 hrs<br>Sun.           |
| 26th/27th July      | Highcliffe S.C.   | Sat. Seafly 25th Anniversary<br>Sun.                             |
| 20th/21st September | Worthing Y.C.     | Sat. 1100 hrs (Practice), 1500 hrs<br>Sun. 1130 hrs and 1500 hrs |
| 5th October         | South Cerney S.C. | —  |

## **2. 1986 National Championships—17th to 22nd August, Seasalter S.C.**

Arrangements for this year's Nationals are now well under way. The start times are approximately one and a half hours before high water, with the Sunday Practice Race at 1000 hrs and the Friday race start at 1345 hrs. The Championships are not being held jointly with any other class or event, so the club is hoping for at least 20 boats this year.

For those of you who have not been to Seasalter before, it is situated on the North Kent coast, near Whitstable, about three miles from the end of the M.2. The clubhouse is on two levels: changing rooms and briefing/games area downstairs, with clubroom, galley, bar and race control upstairs, plus a large balcony with tables and seats overlooking the sea and championship courses. Launching is easy from a gently sloping sandy beach, with at least three hours of water on a spring tide. Conditions are ideal for anyone thinking of entering for his first Nationals and we would very much welcome newcomers to the championships—you don't have to be an expert.

Details of bed and breakfast accommodation can be obtained from "The Heritage", Preston Street, Faversham, Kent (Telephone Faversham 534542). Anyone wishing to camp or caravan on the club land opposite the clubhouse, please contact Brian Howe (Telephone Maidstone 59685) if you require a pitch. There is also a caravan site nearby where caravans may be rented.

A full social programme is also being arranged to ensure that you and those with you all have an enjoyable week and although Seasalter S.C. cannot guarantee the weather—who can?—you can be sure of a warm welcome and good sailing.

The entry fee is £35 per boat. An entry form, notice of meeting and sailing instructions are enclosed (except to those members unlikely to attend). Sails will be checked against sail measurement forms and the S.D.C.A. committee may measure sails.

For further information please contact Brian Howe—telephone as above.

## **3. R.Y.A. Dinghy Show—Sailboat '86**

The increased publicity, and no doubt the presence of Prince Andrew to open the Show, attracted record numbers this year and there was quite a lot of interest in the Seafly stand, with several serious enquiries for second-hand boats, of which more anon. I also received a visit on the stand from Dennis Wilkinson, who used to sail C391 at Worthing, who told me that he had trailed his boat down through France and Spain and thence by ferry to Majorca where it now resides on the beach at Puerto Pollenza—surely the record for the longest trail!

Once again Ian Mansfield's immaculate boat *The Admiral* attracted a great deal of attention. My thanks to Ian for lending his boat and to Barry Thomas who towed it, and also to all those members who helped to man the stand. It was good to meet so many sailing friends in the middle of a long and dreary winter.

## **4. Seaflyes Wanted**

As is usual at the start of the sailing season I have had several enquiries for second-hand boats. I do urge members please to send me details of boats for sale so that I can satisfactorily answer such enquiries. I feel that we sometimes lose prospective new Seafly members because I have nothing to offer them.

## **5. Invitation Events**

Following his success in coming seventh in the Endeavour Trophy, Erik Arthur entered for the Top Dog Trophy sailed in Toppers at Walton-on-Thames S.C. on 15th March. There was a fleet of 20 including several top helmsmen and in light airs, when knowledge of the correct sail trim is all important, Erik did well to come 10th overall after four races considering he had never sailed a Topper before.

Alasdair McPherson and Marcus Melanaphy bravely represented the Seafly Class at the Draycote Water Pursuit race on 22nd March. In strong winds and cold conditions only 37 out of 140 starters made it across the finish line and unfortunately our two heroes and their crews both came to grief, Marcus' boat suffering considerable damage. The Association is very grateful to them for showing the flag at this event and I hope the experience won't have

put them off attending this or other invitation events in the future. I gather that the organisation was very impressive.

Eastbourne S.C. have invited us to enter the Royal Sovereign race on Sunday, 6th July. This is a handicap event with separate races for catamarans, dinghies and sailboards. Class prizes for five boats or more. Anyone from Worthing, Highcliff or Seasalter interested in making up a class entry for the event?

Sheppey Y.C. have the 27th Sheppey Island race on Sunday, 7th September. This also has separate races for dinghies, sailboards and multihulls.

Further information on both these events can be obtained from me.

#### **6. The Oldest Seafly?**

Tony Longworth of the Glenridding Sailing School in Cumbria rang me recently to claim the oldest surviving Seafly; he has just purchased number 6 to add to his instructional fleet which has for many years included Seaflys. Does anyone know of an earlier boat? Tony has joined the Association and would welcome a visit from any Seafly owners who may be in the Lake District.

#### **7. A Visitor from Australia**

Peter Fullagar, who sailed in the Nationals at Plymouth some years ago and also hosted my wife and me when we were in Canberra, has been in England for three weeks in the latter half of May and early June. He was able to spend part of the Spring Bank Holiday with us and sailed with me to add Starcross to the long list of clubs around the world where he has Sailed Seafly. He is now off the Canada to study bird life and an Eskimo community in the far north of Baffin Island before attending a conference in Ottawa.

#### **8. Portsmouth Yardstick**

A reminder that the R.Y.A. has increased the Seafly's Portsmouth Yardstick rating from 113 to 114 this year. Please make sure that your club is applying the new handicap.

#### **9. Subscriptions**

The Treasurer tells me that he has so far received about half the membership subscriptions—£5 full and £2 associate. If you haven't yet paid up for 1986 please do so now by sending your cheque, payable to the Seafly Dinghy Class Association, to Eddie Spicer at West Yalland, North Tawton, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 2AB. A renewal form was enclosed with the last Newsletter if you still have it. Fleet Captains, please chase up your members—the Association needs your subs.

May I also remind members to re-register their boats when they change hands. To take part in Open Meetings and the Nationals you must have a valid boat measurement certificate in your name—it also enhances the value of your boat. So if you have obtained a Seafly recently please send me the old certificate if you have it, together with a re-registration fee of £2, and I will issue a new certificate in your name.

### **SEAFLY DINGHY CLASS ASSOCIATION**

#### **NOTICE OF 1986 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Seafly Dinghy Class Association will be held as usual during the National Championships on Wednesday, 20th August, 1986, at 2000 hrs at Seasalter Sailing Club, Faversham Road, Seasalter, Whitstable, Kent.

Nominations for Committee members and Resolutions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting must be received by the Secretary at least 28 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting under Rule 8 of the Constitution. They must therefore reach the Secretary, Alan Green at "South Cones", 10 Higher Warren Road, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 1LG not later than 23rd July 1986, otherwise they cannot be considered. Members who

cannot attend may appoint a proxy, who may be the Chairman, to vote on their behalf; this must be in writing. An agenda will be sent to paid-up members prior to the Annual General Meeting.

### FOR SALE

SEAFLY: Sail No. 338. GRP hull with wooden decks, sails, road trailer and launching trolley. Good condition. £500. L. Cameron, Canterbury 67451.

SEAFLY: Sail No. 176. Wood boat, recently re-decked. Full suit Banks sails, alloy mast, boom and spinnaker pole, road trailer, trolley and cover. £450. Ron Cockwell, Ringwood (04254) 6749.

SEAFLY: Sail No. 640. Built in 1983 on composite hull with Sapele decks and tanks. Full racing rig, Proctor Gamma mast, Superspars boom, rig tension muscle box. Sails by Banks, main and spinnaker 1983, jib 1984. A fast, modern outfit complete with galvanised combi trolley trailer, available end August '86. Barry Thomas, Verwood (0202) 826426.

### NEW BOAT FOR OLD

Twenty-five years and still going strong. But I doubt if there are many Seaflys of such venerable years still in active use. Some may have survived through painstaking dedication but many will have succumbed to the rigours of time. We've all seen it happen. The boat which was the pride of the fleet with glowing varnish and spotless paintwork; then with a few battle scars of mighty tussles with the fleet—later the built-up layers of varnish flaking and the frost gets in. The paint and varnish are stripped back to wood and a second lease of life starts, but the wood is already tired and the same inevitable process follows. The wood is stained, the initial pride dulled and the boat passes through different hands whose ideas of maintenance might be less than ideal. I expect we've all seen those tired old ladies, with torn or absent boat cover, decks plastered with some proprietary compound in a last ditch effort to keep out the water. But beneath these flaking and warping veneers there lies still a solid heart of Seafly, probably in much the same condition as it was when built twenty years ago. This article is aimed at helping and encouraging anyone who owns a boat which is showing its years to bring it out of its slow decline and back up to a standard that compares with many of the latter-day boats.

My experiences are with C250, now eighteen years old. C250 was built by South Devon Boatbuilders in Dawlish and has always remained at Starcross Yacht Club. It had had only three owners prior to me, and had been well looked after with very little damage. It hadn't reached the forlorn state previously described but was starting to look tired. The only problem which was apparent was at the transom where a strange but structurally very sound repair bore witness to a previous exuberant owner's dance of joy at winning, seconds before he disappeared through the bottom! That person shall, of course, remain nameless. Over the past few years C250 has been almost totally rebuilt using modern materials and incorporating some of the latest Seafly design. I am no expert boatbuilder. To be honest, this is the first boat I have ever worked on to any great extent, but I am an average do-it-yourselfer and will have a go at most things, a description which I suspect fits 90 per cent of people. All you need is space (a good size garage), an amount of cash (doing it properly is not cheap), patience and time!

The first job tackled was the top sides. It is inevitable that this is the first job—it is the most cosmetic. Marine ply can take only so much varnishing, scraping, sanding and re-varnishing, with liberal doses of salt water and frost, before it looks a mess and after 00 years of hard use C250 was looking her age. The side tanks had also stained due to earlier water penetration so these too were to be replaced.

The hardest part comes first! To strike the first blow at the object which you have painstakingly looked after, painted, varnished and protected. Mallet hits chisel. Wood splinters and flies—and no-one even did a 720! That first blow does 99 per cent of the damage. Once it is struck you cannot go back, so work progresses with wild abandon—like

chopping up firewood. The fore deck and side tanks pulled off easily in whole sheets and were seemingly stuck on with wallpaper paste (this is a description I later will regret when trying to remove the bottom of the boat which was glued like concrete!). I quickly learnt that my reasonably comprehensive tool selection was short of a few items. An electric saw (jig saw), G cramps (I had a few but you need dozens) and the wonder of the modern age, epoxy resin. Don't try and do this sort of woodwork without it. It's the amateur boatbuilder's friend. I used a product called S.P. Systems (Structural Polymers of the Isle of Wight). For those of you not familiar with it, it will seal wood—for ever, glue wood—for ever! It will fill gaps where we amateurs make occasional small errors with a bond stronger than the original wood and bulked up with special fillers it can provide neat reinforcing fillets which will later defy all attempts to break. Be careful though. If you're sealing top surfaces prior to varnish, etc. do it on a warm, dry day—not in a damp, cold garage. The epoxy loves moisture and goes a delicate milky colour. Also when applying it with a special hard roller, do it fast—epoxy can go off hard very quickly. But don't be put off by this or by the expense; because it is very expensive.

The panels I used were stripped sapele, which is probably the most common decking finish. When epoxy resin coated it should last indefinitely with little maintenance. A tip on using stripped sapele. Where the sections of veneer are joined when the ply sheets are made a small line of adhesive is left. This you can't see when the sheets are in their natural state but show up as faint white lines after you have epoxied the surface and the wood colours come apparent. By this time it is too late! So if you don't want faint white lines on your decks, carefully sand the invisible lines where the veneers join *before* varnishing or epoxying. With the aid of the original panels as patterns and a jig saw the refitting of new side tanks and decks is common sense. Don't use pins if possible, they're not needed with modern epoxy glue—use clamps wherever possible, or tourniquets. One thing sailors have is plenty of rope and with such a length of rope, a lever and a bit of ingenuity, a surprising amount of force can be applied to coax panels into the correct contour. The finish and trim of these panels can be as pretty as time and patience allows. I added a light coloured inlay between the foredeck section and sandwiched between the edge of the boat and the rubbing strip. This contrast of woods not only looks pretty but it is easy to do.

Finally, a mahogany strip, gently coaxed around the deck edge and planed to shape, and your tired Seafly looks years younger. My only tip—the edges of the ply all need planing for a perfect fit—and you only get one chance of perfection, so keep the blade of your plane razor sharp and go gently! I don't remember any major difficulties doing this job—it really was quite easy and the effect dramatic. A new boat for the cost of three sheets of ply and some epoxy. That is until the next rebuild.

I had been aware for some time that the back panels of C250 were on the decline and had previously cut in a couple of small patches to replace soft wood. But you can't chase rot for ever and the inevitable happened in August '85. Imagine the scene. Your boat is loaded up on its road trailer outside the front door and you are just ready to hitch up to set off for the Nationals. During the usual wait for your spouse you check the straps, shake the mast and generally prod and probe to ensure everything is tight. Then you manage to poke your bloody finger through the bottom of the boat!!! Disbelief is followed by panic which is followed by woe. Investigation reveals a large unsound area and it's obvious that not much has been separating your crew from an unusual and undignified exit through the bottom. Well, with the use of a bit of marine ply inside and the wonderful adhesive properties of a bit of Fablon outside we survived the rest of the season; but the next episode in the history of C250 was determined.

*[To be continued in next issue]*