



## January 2011 newsletter

### Commodore's Blog

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Happy New Year to everyone! I hope you had an enjoyable and restful festive holiday.

The New Year brought a tale of two halves. After the "Big Freeze" which has meant there has been no sailing for over a month we were all hopeful that the recent thaw would mean that at least we could sail on the 1<sup>st</sup> for the Resolution Trophy. Indeed the thickness of the ice had decreased from about 6 inches on Boxing Day to merely half an inch on Hogmany.

However the ice sheet was pretty difficult to shift given the rather benign conditions. There were a happy few that did turn up on New Years Day but alas it was not to be. However, that old soothsayer George said that by the Sunday it would be all gone. Oh us of little faith as indeed, given the overnight rain and breeze, it all cleared by Sunday which was a great relief to those who took a chance and came down for what was the start of the Frostbite Series (aptly named). I didn't wait around to see the results of the day but I am sure the handful or so who did race enjoyed a welcome return to some exercise after the festive break.



So, if all goes to plan the lake is now fully re-opened with a full race programme this Sunday. The galley will also make a welcome return because the forecast is for it to remain pretty cold and no doubt we will need reviving!

Looking ahead don't forget that Burns Supper is on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January. This is a ticket only social evening so please get yours soon as they are selling fast.

Look forward to seeing you on the lake soon.

Gordon Scott

### Something to Chew on

As members of Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club most of us refer to the club as being the "best club in the south west" which we quickly follow up with "in fact the best club in the country"; but how do we determine the word "best"?

Well it has to be admitted that we must be off to a good start as the very lake that we sail on is situated in a very beautiful part of the Chew Valley and it offers superb sailing all year round. However there has to be more to it than just the lake as its people who make the big difference to success or failure, and we have the needs of something like 600 members of all ages and backgrounds to satisfy.

Fortunately, as we are a Members Club, we are not consumed with the words "profit and loss"; although we must always maintain a healthy bank balance. Neither do we have any shareholders or dividends to worry about, nor are we chased by the likes of the Tax Man or the VAT Man.

Therefore if we take care to control our finances we can concentrate on the practical side of running the club. That's why we have a managerial style structure that we refer to as the General Committee (GC); I am sure that you are all aware of the importance of and the work undertaken by those who volunteer their time to this and other committees.

So just how do we begin to judge "success" and being the "best"? Well for a starter there are those of you who sail in competitions at other clubs and the cruisers who make themselves known at other sailing venues, and I know from personal experience that we are always welcomed back time and again. Then there are the Open Events that we run at our club and we always get post event feedback that indicate yet more success for the club.

Perhaps more than anything else we must ask ourselves if we consider our club to be a friendly club. If we are not then we can't claim to be the best. It's a question that we can only answer on an individual basis. I think it's a very friendly club and, listening to other members, I know that they agree with me. However, if you do not share my view of the club then please approach one of the committee members, or better still, write to the GC making your views known and identify what you think we should do to make the place friendlier. Positive feedback is important.

Having mentioned the General Committee we should consider the role that this committee plays in running the club, but in so doing we must not forget the army of non committee members who also give up their time in support of running a successful club.

Every member has his or her idea as to how the club should be run and this does, from time to time, inevitably lead to some criticism of the GC. That's OK so long as its constructive criticism. During my career I worked alongside a US Aerospace Company and meetings between our two companies were sometimes fraught with arguments, but I do remember one saying that was trotted out time and again by the US and that was "Don't let the guy who says it cant be done get in the way of the guy who is doing it" A positive approach, but on occasions it prompted the following response from the UK; "So long as the guy is doing what we want in ac-





cordance with the requirement specification”.

Our CG should not be treated any differently – let them get on with the job, but if we can see that the final result is not what we set out to achieve then make that point in a polite but positive way. After all it's your club and we all get things wrong from time to time and this is not taking anything away from the mountain of work that GC gets through on our behalf.

Having looked at the management of the club I turn to the facilities that we provide for our members and visitors. As a sailing club do we need table tennis or table football; a play area is not the most important thing in the world and we could possibly do

without a bar and a galley.

Stripping it back to its bare essentials, what we need is somewhere to park our car and store our boat, a lake to sail on, safety/security and somewhere to change and, if you are really lucky, an organised training programme. Happily I can say that we achieve all of this to meet the demands of some 600 members. In fact, when looking at other sailing clubs, we probably do it a lot better.

So having stripped the club back to its bare essentials would we still feel it to be the “best” Club? Some would still be happy with the club as it provides them with the bare essentials that they feel they need to sail, but to most we will have stripped the heart out of the club and it would be a slap in the face for all of those members who have made, and continue to make, the social side of the club a success.

Table tennis, table football and the play area etc are all items that benefit the club. Keep the kids happy and you go a long way towards making the parents happy, and we achieve this by providing all of these support activities and more. We have an active racing and cruising section, a strong junior contingent, representation from all three local universities and local schools, Avon and Somerset Police as well as a self governing disabled sailing section.

Our galley provides food for all of our social functions as well as breakfast, lunch and teas on sailing days; it provides the forum at lunch time for the sailors to sit over their lunch discussing the mornings sailing/racing.

The bar is the universal hub of the post sailing day where the banter is at its peak – but it is always (well usually) good hearted fun. Like our Galley, it strives to provide a good service to the members – the bar especially so as it is run by a volunteer – George, we all know George. If you have missed out on the bar or are uncertain as to its popularity come along on a Wednesday evening when the evening pints series is on; you may just get through the bar door.

Of course all of the facilities I have mentioned just happen, don't they? Well no they don't, they are bought about by the dedication of the GC and our members who make time to help run the club. The downside to this is that sometimes those very people are the first to be blamed if something is not right or is different to

what it was last week.

From personal experience I can say that if our club has any problem at all it is with the readiness of just a few members to continually blame "them" for all that goes wrong; them, of course, being Committee Members or members who stand out as the willing volunteers.

Our Club is where it is today because of those members passed and present who are prepared to man the ship alongside the majority of members who support them – yes we all make mistakes, but we must be overcoming those mistakes otherwise we would not still be the "best club in the country".

And so back to the beginning; are we the best club in the South West? I certainly don't know as I have not been entertained at that many sailing clubs, unlike many of you who do the circuit, but for what its worth I think our club takes a lot of beating – enjoy it.

Have a nice day; Brian Brooks

### **A message from the President.....**

Happy New Year to you all.

At the start of 2011, the General Committee would like to ask your views and ideas on what actions they could take to enable you to get more out of your club membership. Please bear in mind though! that our budget is not limitless!

I will collate your thoughts and wish lists for the Committee to consider. Clearly if you are happy with the status quo, no reply is necessary (but I will pass on any contented words!).

*John Smalley, President*

## **Chew Sailors in the outside world 2010**

Once again 2010 has been a busy year for Chew sailors competing around the world.

In the **Fireball** World Championships in Barbados Derian and Andy Scott were 19<sup>th</sup> out of 70 with Derian the second lady helm. They also won the Castle Cove, Weymouth and Chew Open meetings.

The Rose family excelled themselves at the **Scorpion** National Championships at Looe with Peter and Thomas finishing 11<sup>th</sup>. Andrew and John finished 19<sup>th</sup> but in doing so won a race, a fantastic achievement.

After getting a new boat, Ralph and Ollie Singleton went roaring off at the first **RS 800** grand Prix event with a race win only to crash into another boat and end up in hospital. Any lack of form was only temporary as they ended up 14<sup>th</sup> at the National Championships.



Paul Croote and Tim Unerman went to Largo Bay on the south coast of Fife for the **Cherub** national Championship where they finished second, winning three races en route.

John Shaw and Josh Praeter won the bronze section of the **Wayfarer** World Championships at Weymouth.

Tim and Jack Johnson went to Carnac to finish 11<sup>th</sup> in the **RS Feva** World Championships after a 5<sup>th</sup> place at the Nationals.

Andy Hewitt made half way in the **Musto Skiff** National Championships and in the **Streaker** Primrose Salt finished second lady helm.



The **Flying Fifteen** fleet had a relatively quiet year. Ian Cadwallader and Dave Sweet finished 12<sup>th</sup> at the European Championships in La Rochelle. Mike Thompson and Simon Millington were 18<sup>th</sup>. Mike Thompson won the Class division at the Birkett Trophy, a long distance event on Ullswater. Of considerable note, though was Alex Timms and David George's second place in the Silver Fleet at the Southern Championships in a blowy Weymouth Bay in their first season sailing a fifteen

Many of our **Laser** sailors were out and about doing very well. Steve Smith won the Chew Laser Open where the first five boats were from Chew and was 37<sup>th</sup> in the national Championships overall, Pete Sherwin finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Masters Worlds qualifier

series and Duncan Whitrow 4<sup>th</sup> in the Radial Apprentice Masters. Richard Cumpsty was 12<sup>th</sup>, Andrew Rose 19<sup>th</sup> and Cameron Scott 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Standard Nationals. Richard Cumpsty and Cameron Scott also acquitted themselves well in the Laser Youth World Championships at Largs.

The **Solo** fleet has been gathering momentum latterly and they have been busy travelling to Open Meetings recently. Notably, Chris Goldhawk finished 12<sup>th</sup> of 78 in the national Championships, 14<sup>th</sup> of 96 at the Inland Championships and 12<sup>th</sup> out of 62 at an end-of-season event. Nigel Snedker won the South West series by winning all five events he entered. He also finished 7<sup>th</sup> at the end-of-season event with Nick Fisher a creditable 36<sup>th</sup>

Similarly, the **Toppers** have been on the road competing in a number of regional and national events. Tom Hole finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the SW series travellers. James Cummins and Ellie Cumpsty were 28 and 29<sup>th</sup> in the same series. Ellie was a very creditable 28<sup>th</sup> in the Gold fleet at the National Championships and Tom 85<sup>th</sup> in the Silver fleet. It was Ed Jones, though, who topped the achievement list this year. After coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in the World Championships at Lake Garda he went on to become the Topper National Champion. This gave him an entry into the Endeavour Trophy where he put up a splendid performance against the country's best sailors in a two man boat with an asymmetric spinnaker.

## Solo Update

Hello to all our readers, firstly, I must thank John Shimmell for the work he has done over the last two years as Solo Fleet Captain. Not an easy job. When you are new to the club *and* dinghy racing it is difficult to know where to begin, John has made great efforts to try to get to know all the club has to offer, and, he has tried to help those starting racing by running Saturday afternoon practices, with the help of some of Chew's more notable race practitioners.

I have been a member of Chew for a total of 18 years, having rejoined 2 years ago after trying my hand with the golf bats. Unlike Tiger, I didn't find any outside influences to put me off my game, the internal workings of my brain were more than capable of doing that on their own! So, after several years of that I realised that I missed my sailing and bought myself a lovely wooden Solo. What! Nick sailing a Solo, surely he's not old enough, sorry to say, despite these youthful looks there are a few more years behind me than most realise, or, as Danny Pilgrim says, I must have had an easy paper round. I was welcomed back to the club from the outset and met many old friends, oh, and some young ones as well. Last year I started going to some of the larger Solo events and realised that there was a lot of work to do. Results have improved this year, with help from the Solo Association Trainers and from my fellow club members.

So, what can I do for you? I, hopefully, can give you the encouragement to start racing, to go to open meetings and onto the championship opens. The opens for this year are just about finished, but, next years western area starts in March, so, winter training beckons. A brief practice day was held at short notice last weekend, (emails sent and announced on website) George and myself met with David Crawford and Charles Tricks, after a brief chat with some minor adjustments boats were launched and practice got underway. As there were only the 4 of us we paired up and did the usual hard work for two hours, sailing between 2 buoys, tacking, gibing and mark rounding. Definite improvements were noted. You don't have to race to join in, if you would just like to improve your sailing come and join us. Training with a Solo Association Trainer is free, if you are a member of the association. I will contact all the solo sailors by email (pls forward yours if you didn't receive an email in October) to ascertain how many want to have formal training, and arrange for it to be on the calendar.

The Solo end of season Champs are at Draycote on the 30<sup>th</sup> October. 3 Races 1 day event. At the moment there are 3 or 4 Chew members expecting to attend, why not join us.

Please contact me at any time, (details below), to discuss your sailing. Be aware that I spend nearly half my time abroad and calls to my mobile may be expensive, for both of us. Try the email in the first instance, I receive them usually within 24 hrs, or text.

Nick Fisher

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PS. Beware the killer shrimp! Yes Derrian has bought a Solo

## Topper Fleet news

It has been a wonderful year for Topper sailing; the standard has been very high with some brilliant club racing and Topper traveller events. The Chew Valley Topper open at the start of the year was a brilliant event with Ellie Cumpsty, a Chew Valley sailor herself, taking home the number one spot. It was also a good event for the rest of the Chew sailors to get to grips with the standard of the fleet for future events. However not all the exciting racing is done at the club, a few of the Topper sailors have been doing the Topper traveller series with events at Weymouth, Frampton, Portishead, Roadford and much more. Tom Hole ended the season in 5<sup>th</sup> place overall which was highest Chew sailor, others who did the series were: Ed Jones in 11<sup>th</sup>, Ellie Hitchings in 20<sup>th</sup>, James Cummins in 27<sup>th</sup>, Ellie Cumpsty in 28<sup>th</sup>, Ella Cudmore in 29<sup>th</sup> and Jess Harding in 31<sup>st</sup>. The series was a huge success and to all the other Chew sailors who aren't doing them, why not give it a try? If you have questions and want to know more please contact me either here at the club or phone / email me, details below.

As a result to the great success of the Topper traveller series Ella Cudmore, James Cummins and Jess Harding have all qualified for the South West Zone Squad. This means that over the winter period they will be going all over the South West with the rest of the Zone squad to practice and improve their Topper skills so that during the racing season they can do really well and if they are ambitious then when they get older they can do International events and if they're really good maybe the Olympics. Being part of the Zone squad doesn't just mean that they will improve on their sailing skills they also learn about psychology, sport science, fitness, meteorology, nutrition, hydration, growth and maturation. This is excellent news for those Chew sailors and we wish them good luck and well done.

August Antics was a brilliant event with everyone having fun. On the first day it was extremely windy with a lot of capsizes and injuries however it gave everyone a good chance to do some theory and practice their heavy wind sailing. On the second day it was very much the same as the first with even more wind! The intermediate Toppers were coached by the RYA champion club coaches to develop the next generation of Topper sailors and improve their skills which was a huge success. The third and last day was upon us and the wind condition was completely different to the last two days, there was hardly any wind what so ever. After a morning of light wind practising the race was about to start and after a crowded start Rafe Watson went on to win the race and was crowned winner of August Antics.

Over the course of the year we have had a number of different sailing race series and about 10 sailors have participated. This isn't the greatest number of sailors ever and we would like more; but as noted the fleet sailors are generally away competing. However there has been some fantastic sailing and a variety of conditions to test the sailors. What is so great about the club racing is that they learn of each other so they can improve and this is why we want more sailors participating. The winners from each series - but not necessarily qualifiers as they didn't all do enough races





are: Autumn Series - James Seager (AM) and James Cummins (PM); the winner of the Spring Series was James Cummins and the winners of the Frostbite Series are Jess Harding (AM) and Ed Jones (PM).

A huge thank you to all the Topper sailors who have participated in any of the events these include: Kirsty Scott, Murray Scott, Jess Harding, Ella Cudmore, James Cummins, James Seager, Ellie Hitchings and Miriam Woodbridge. Also I would like to say good luck to the ex Topper sailors, Ed Jones and Ellie Cumpsty, who are moving into the Laser class.

## Junior Sailing

For the Sunday morning junior sailors the Summer has been busy. We began the season in mid-April with so many Oppie sailors, all keen to learn, that we had to split the morning into two groups just to accommodate the numbers. It has been wonderful to see so many pink sails on the water each week. Many of the youngest children were game to sail in all conditions, and those of us involved will not forget easily the dramatic Oppie capsize early in the season. Coupled with their time at August Antics I think these "starter" sailors have had some great training this Summer, and many of them have made significant progress. I would like to say a huge thank you to all the Sunday Oppie coaches, and particularly to Ian Cooke whose patience, commitment and reliability carried the day.

The junior Toppers have been equally busy and committed, led masterfully once more by Reuben Woodbridge. Thank you Reuben -your leadership of Junior Challenge will be missed. Frequently we had 10 Toppers on the water learning from Reuben how to tack and gybe more effectively, how to make the most of light and strong winds, how to plot their ley lines around the course (I needed that training myself!), and generally becoming more skillful and more confident. Particular congratulations to Ella Mack and Stephanie Cummins, who both made huge progress with their sailing.

At the start of the season we "spun off" several Topper sailors from the training group into the main fleet, as was always the aim of the Sunday morning training. Although some entered the main fleet nervously, they have all grown in confidence and ability and have really enjoyed some keen competition amongst each other. We hope to continue seeing an increased number of juniors on the main fleet start line. Congratulations to James Cummins who came through this year as the winner of the Junior Challenge cup.

I would like to thank the club for purchasing the two Fevas for junior use, and I know several expectant youngsters who are waiting on the starting blocks for the go-ahead to sail these. I would also like to thank Max Passmore for his efforts and patience in taking out some juniors to crew in his Flying Fifteen. More of this



please Max! I know some of the children were a little on the light side, but one certainty is that they will be bigger by next year.

Lastly, but by no means least, thank you to all the parents who have supported Sally and me. Onwards now to next season – the calendar for the junior sailing is underway with a



## A day in the life of a Topper zone sailor

A day in the life of a South West Zone Squad sailor.

9:30-10:30

We all had come in our own cars up to Shepton Mallet which was our meeting point and then parked the cars and all went into Jess' car which was a pleasant trip down to Weymouth. After that we navigated our way through the huge academy to the spinnakers restaurant which was where we would sign up and meet the coach. After everyone had signed up there was a general introduction to all the coaches and a presentation on what the squad hopes to achieve.

10:30-11:20

At 10:30 we had a briefing with the coach on what to expect in the zone squad and what we would be doing including the six training weekends in various parts of the South West. We also received our folders which had goal setting, physical conditioning, plan do review and much more in them which would help us to achieve our potential when sailing. The great thing with our folders is that they don't just help us with the actual sailing but they also help us with fitness and other stuff.

11:20-11:35

After the briefing we went outside to do a bit of running and get our pulse raising. We started of doing some general running and then we went into some running races (which my team won) and then some short fun games so we could get to know each other. We then did some warm down stretches in a circle to help the lactic acid go away. It then started to get a bit cold so we decided to go back inside so we could do some more games.

11:35-12:20

We then went into the briefing room again so we could do some target setting and what methods we would be using for this. The method of choice for the target setting was a target board; you fill in how good you are at something on the board and then improve on the things you aren't so good at. We also went through the expectations of what you should be achieving when you have finished using the zone squad. For a lot of the people who are too old to participate in the zone squad next year there targets where to go into the intermediate or the national

squad.

12:20-13:20 Lunch Time

13:20-14:05

After lunch we went into the gym to do a Physio session for the sailors and the parents. The whole idea of the session was to help you to be in the correct posture generally and sailing. The key factors they were teaching us to do when we are sailing are keeping your knees down, have a straight body with the boat, don't have your toe straps too low and don't slouch down the side of the boat. Also when you're out and about generally try and maintain a straight body in line with your foot.

14:05-14:55

We then went into the main area to help rig up a boat and change the settings to optimize the performance of the boat. This was a great opportunity to discuss what makes the best boat and share ideas and tips. We also wrote down notes and took pictures so we could put the ideas on our boat when we get the chance to do it. Personally I got a lot of tips and ideas written down in my note pad so it might take a long time for me to install them all.



14:55-15:55

We then went back into the spinnakers restaurant so the high performance manager could do a presentation on fitness, nutrition and hydration. We learnt loads from the presentation like which drinks to have in certain conditions and what type of food groups we should be having on the water. Towards the end of the presentation he did a quiz for everyone, the quiz teams were parents VS children. The sort of questions he was asking were for example where; should you have a go bar during, before or after sailing? The children dominated in the quiz!

16:00

Unfortunately it was time to go back home as the day had ended. We said our goodbyes and

left the academy with smiles on our faces.

## Renewal Notices

Membership renewals will be sent out in February. The Committee have yet to set the fee levels for this year.

Membership of the club is full with just 5 vacancies for Junior/Student membership. As last year I will simplify the process by pre-populating the renewal form with the data that I hold on the membership records for you.

Therefore all you need to do is check that the details are correct and return the form to me by **1<sup>st</sup> March 2011**. This allows me a clear month to process the renewal forms and send out the 2011 membership pack before the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline.

Happy sailing!

John Bone, *Hon Membership Secretary*

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## *Officers & Committee Members 2010-11*

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