



REEF KNOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF WELLS SAILING CLUB

No 6 - Spring 2003

COMMODORE'S REPORT

Throughout the winter months plans for the forthcoming sailing season have been put into place. For some, boat preparation for the year is well underway, others (myself included), grapple to find the time to even take the cover off! The common theme is that even in March, our thoughts are to the pleasure of sailing in warm and idyllic conditions in the summer months lets hope the 2003 season meets our expectations. If the recent weather is an indication of things to come, we will not be disappointed!

It has been widely recognised, well debated and frequently discussed, how we as a club can improve the number of boats on the water that participate in what can be termed as our life blood — regular club racing.

A number of new formats will be adopted in this years sailing programme which should focus and encourage members to take to the water on key weekends. The sailing committee hope that you our members will respond positively to these changes and we look forward to seeing larger turnouts on the water this year.

It is also hoped that members will become more actively involved in assisting with the co-ordination of our racing, thereby helping the sailing committee in promoting our waterborne activities.

We recognise that a priority must be to encourage our junior members to sail competitively on a regular basis and capitalise on the enthusiasm and commitment of those who so obviously enjoy our Junior Week. A number of Friday evenings have been earmarked for Junior racing this year to bridge the gap between Junior Week activities and regular Club Racing.

We would like to thank all of the members who helped the club with interest free loans to assist with the purchase and refurbishment of the *Natalie Gail* and we are pleased to report that the club has now been able to repay these loans in full during the last few weeks, again thanks to all those who helped in making it possible to purchase this excellent committee boat.

Our attentions have also been on upgrading our Club facilities considerable internal improvements have taken

place over the last 12 months with the Kitchen and Gents changing room being totally redecorated.

A lot of work has also gone into drastically improving the Bar facilities and the upgrading of the Ladies cloakroom a special note of thanks must go out to all who have helped us in this respect.

Further improvements are planned and shortly we intend to replace the front window of the club which is in a poor condition with a PVC window, which will incorporate double doors opening out to the adjacent area. It is also hoped that we should be able to complete the refurbishment of the Gents Changing rooms before the start of the season and we are presently looking to tile the shower and toilet area with quarry tiles in early April.

Look forward to seeing you on the water or at our social events in 2003

Chris Hardy

VICE COMMODORE'S REPORT

Dear Members,

Another year and the sailing season will soon be upon us.

In recent years Wells Sailing Club has, as have many others, suffered from a decline in the number of members prepared to compete in the racing field.

I have over a period of time had many conversations with members and officials of other clubs and no one single reason for this general decline has come to light.

We have in the past at Wells tried to encourage more people to get out on the water e.g. Fleet Captains, changes to various trophies, three up in certain series etc. but to no avail.

This year your sailing committee has made what are quite radical changes to the programme.

More back to back racing, the introduction of Junior racing on selected Friday evenings and extended open meetings for the Sharpies hoping to encourage bigger fleets at these events.

Although every effort was made to ensure that Sharpie racing at Wells did not clash with open weekends along the coast, Brancaster Staithe S.C. does have an open event on the 21st/22nd June.

Junior Week again takes place the week leading into the Regatta 18th to 22nd August, but this year will be restricted to the intermediate and elementary groups. The advance students will be encouraged to race on those Fridays in the sailing programme, and if possible a further period will be allotted during the season.

I would like to point out that handicap and all comers races are also open to those young people who wish to participate.

Natalie Gail will be launched on the 6th April at 9.00 a.m. Please try to make yourselves available to assist, she's a big boat!

Finally may I wish you all an enjoyable and successful sailing season.

Gary Anthony

REAR COMMODORE'S REPORT

The New Year celebrations started with a full clubhouse to try out the delights of Peter Scillitoe's magnificent new bar and relax in the ambience of the soft lighting of the bar canopy whilst awaiting the results of the Prize Draw. A generous number of donated prizes meant that few people went home empty handed and the club finances looked happier too.

The French Evening on Feb 8th saw an amazing range of Gallic costumes as everyone present put their heart and soul into making it an unforgettable night, especially Sara, whose home must still smell of onion soup, and Alison who valiantly produced boeuf bourguignon for 40 people whilst suffering from a broken wrist. She was helped by an ex-commodore who came as a French Letter and later led a hilarious singing lesson in both French and Franglais. Thanks too to Bob Curtis for the artwork which helped to create the Bistro feeling and make it such a great night.

Following on the party theme, there will be a Texas Roundup on March 29th so if you missed the last party, book early as it promises to be another great occasion and places are going quickly. The Fitting Out Supper is scheduled for Sat. 19th April, so make a note of this in your diaries and again — BOOK EARLY! The clubhouse can only accommodate a maximum of 50 people for a sit-down meal, so it is first come, first booked in. For bookings, please phone David Blakesley on 01553 841422 Or Chris Hardy on 01328 710774. When the weather improves, we hope to organize a picnic up the creeks for all sailors and non-sailors, using any small craft available including canoes and rafts.

On the building front, there are plans afoot to replace the shop window at the front of the club with a central door with new windows to each side. This door may eventually lead out onto a decking verandah which will be a tremendous asset to the club so that members can enjoy a drink whilst watching the racing or simply seeing the evening sun go down. This has only been made possible by the generosity of Uncle Ed who has offered to supply the materials at cost price and to oversee the labour. From the Club's point of view, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity and must not be missed, so please support the bar and the social evenings as much as you can so that we can raise the necessary money in the most enjoyable and pain-free way possible!

Keep an eye on our website for details of Social & Sailing Events at www.wellssailingclub.org.

David Blakesley

WSC SOCIAL PROGRAMME 2003

Sat 29 h Mar ... Texas Roundup 7.30pm Sun 30 h Mar...
.Work Party 10.30am Gary Anthony Sat 19 Apr ... Fitting
Out Supper 7.30pm Sat 3rd May.... Cruiser Supper
8.00pm 25-28 h May.... British Sharpie
Championships at ... Grafham Water ... Curry Lunch
1.30pm . Midsummer Night Supper 7.30pm
Sat 5th July ... Brunch on the Beach ... 10.30 am . .
Day Boats Evening . Barbecue WSC Fish
Supper for Sharpies 7.30pm

. Wed 23rd July

18-22 Aug Wed 20 h Aug Fri 22nd Aug

Sun 24 h. Aug

Fri 1st Aug NWNSA Breakfast Baps 09.15
onwards Junior Week — Juniors Disco 7pm
..... Junior Week BBQ 6pm onwards I
Wells Regatta BBQ 12.00..... onwards Sat 27 h
Sept..... Laying Up Supper 7.30pm Sat 8 h Nov
Posh Nosh Annual dinner 7.30pm Sat 13th
Dec Christmas Party 7.30pm Fri 26~. Dec
Boxing Day in the Clubhouse 1 pm Thu 1
Jan 04..... New Year's Day Draw 12.00
onwards

SHARPIE REFLECTIONS

What a strange position the Sharpie occupies on the dinghy sailing scene! And what a unique position it occupies in the life of Wells Sailing Club.

From being an outdated and therefore relatively cheap craft which enabled local would be sailors to get afloat, it has through time, undergone a transformation.

Because of its attributes of elegance, performance and

durability it somehow survived when many other worthy types disappeared. Like attic memorabilia the Sharpies lurked and they re-emerged from relative worthlessness to become recognised for their special properties.

Many of the Sharpies have been campaigned continuously, the competitive vanguard has ensured that enough technological advance has been added to maintain relevance to current practice.

Wells S.C. may be considered one of the hot beds of Sharpie life. This is a double-edged sword. Since the class is the backbone of club life then it follows that the barometer of Sharpie activity is reflected in the vitality of the club. Conversely the club's health activates the class.

The social changes wrought by time passing bring with them unforeseen consequences. Such elements as mobility, availability of instant activities, information and gratification are a reality which affect us all. We may look back nostalgically to the days when many of us took basically equipped Sharpies (in good numbers) out to race in Wells Harbour. By embracing new arrangements whereby the carefully restored, maintained and updated craft can meet in significant competition, both the livelihood of the club and the class can be enhanced, though as they say nostalgia is not what it was!

Richard Cracknell

HANDICAP SAILING FOR JUNIORS

There is a small group of handicap sailors, mainly in Lasers, which join in with the racing during the season.

Junior week was again very successful with the number of applicants exceeding places available. It was a great week of sailing with varied weather conditions. I would like to say a big thanks to all those who lent lasers and other classes of boats. Also thanks to Richard Cracknell, Peter Terrington and Terry Angles plus all the on and off the water helpers.

This season the sailing committee have planned a series of races for juniors. These will take place on Friday evenings after school, check your racing programme or the Wells Sailing Club website. Give your boats a spring clean and check your fittings! Rescue boats and starters will be there so do make the effort to turn out. Alex Curtis

Junior Sail Training Week – 18th to 22nd August 2003

This year's Junior Sail Training Week will cater for beginner and intermediate sailors only. It will be open to junior and family members as at 31st March 2003 and who will be between the ages of 11 and 16 years on

commencement of the week. The closing date for applications will be 31st May 2003. If there are any places remaining after that date they will be offered to non-members who will be required to join the Club at the normal rate.

Qualified instructors and competent Club sailors will give tuition. We are fortunate in that, Club member, Terry Angles is a R.Y.A. Coach. Offers of help and loans of appropriate craft, especially Toppers, are needed to make Junior Week a success. There are many ways in which Club members can help, please let me know if you feel you can assist us.

The nominal charge for members is £50 per applicant. All children participating should be competent swimmers capable of swimming a minimum of 50 metres.

The Week will commence on Monday 18th at 9.15 a.m. in the Clubhouse and will finish on Friday 22nd at 5.15 p.m.

Wells Sailing Club Junior Week – August 2002

Application forms can be downloaded from the Sailing Club web site (www.wellssailingclub.org) or obtained direct from me at the following address.

Peter Terrington, Malt Cottage, Croft Yard, Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1JS Tel: 01328 711126 E-mail Peter.Terrington@farmline.com

DRASCOMBE RALLY AT WELLS

Drascombe owners, whether members of the Club or not, are very welcome to join this rally on the weekend of 5th and 6th July.

For those not already afloat at Wells, we plan to launch on the Saturday morning tide. High tide is at around 10.40 hrs. so we will aim to get off at around 09.00 hrs. Sailing, as ever, will be weather dependent. Possibilities include a sail along the coast to the east or west depending on wind and either an early lunch afloat or at East Hills, or a late lunch after mooring/recovering boats. An evening barbecue is planned at the Clubhouse.

Sunday will see us chasing each other and similar boats around the buoys for the honour of holding aloft the Bill Jackson Cup. Launch from the W.S.C. Clubhouse or public slipway, start at about 10.00 hrs.

The rally is advertised in the Spring 2003 issue of *Drascombe Association News*, the newsletter for members of the Drascombe Association. The owners of two visiting boats, a Scaffie and a Dabber, have already signed up and I very much hope that more DAN readers will do so.

This is a great opportunity for WSC to welcome visitors to the Club and to introduce them to the pleasures and

challenges of boating in N. Norfolk!

If you have a Drascombe or similar boat, why not join us? Please also let others know about the rally. For those without boats that would like to join in there will almost certainly be opportunities to crew.

Richard Price
Tel. 01223 842274

SHARPIE CHAMPIONSHIPS

British — 25th to 28th May — Grafham Water

European — 20th to 25th July — Brancaster Staithe

WELLS SAILING CRUISERS

The WSC Cruiser Supper will be held on Saturday, 3rd May at 20.00 hrs in the Clubhouse. All Club members will be welcome as will Brancaster Staithe S.C. Cruising members.

We hope to hold the Golden Cockle Cruiser race on the same day. The course will be around the navigation buoys, starting in Holkham Bay at 10.00 hrs. This should give the Brancaster cruisers time to reach the start line.

Any members with sailing cruisers who would like to take part in the race should watch the Club notice board for further details.

WELLS SAILING CLUB ONLINE

There are two major aspects to the club being online. The first is the website which contains all current information about sailing and social events. We are able to update this as changes occur.

The second aspect is communication. We are able to use email to write to members who are online and choose to be contacted in this way. This is currently running as a back up to the normal method of communication, by post. The main advantage of email over traditional mail is in cost and time. Now that we are online e-mails can be sent with virtually no cost. We do not have to pay for printing and postage or to stuff envelopes and delivery of information is immediate. Clearly it would be an advantage to the club if members, particularly those who are regularly online, would agree to be contacted *only* in this way.

At the moment fewer than 25 members email addresses have been supplied thank you to those who have supplied theirs. The more we have the better the system will work. It would be particularly useful to have the addresses of those who regularly sail, so that reminders

can be sent out in the few days preceding an event, encouraging them to come along and join in. Gary has rearranged the sailing this year in a push to encourage bigger fleets. We hope that emailed reminders will help with that effort. As a matter of privacy none of the club members email addresses are ever supplied to other members or any third party neither are they published on the website. www.wellssailingclub.org

Ben Cracknell

WSC – NORWICH FROSTBITES TEAM

The first leg of the team race on the River Yare was held in January in near perfect conditions. It was a beautiful sunny day with an ideal sailing breeze. Despite WSC sailors turning out in force, on the day the Frostbite sailors could not be matched and with a result of Frostbites 15 Wells 27 WSC will have to be on top form to recover the Brackenash Trophy in 2003.

Gary Anthony will be advising members of the revised date for the return leg in Wells.

EDITORS NOTE:

Thank you to all the contributors to this Reef Knot.

The majority of the articles were sent to me as e-mail attachments which saves a considerable amount of time in producing the copy ready for printing.

I look forward to receiving your contributions for future issues. Perhaps your experiences during the 2003 sailing season, in Wells or away.

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