

NEW 15 SPRINT

The Official Magazine of the U.K. Sprint 15 Association
www.sprint15.com

autumn 2011

CHAMPIONSHIP NEWS

Sport &
Una Nationals

TRAINING & TIPS

from the experts

PWLLHELI

read about the action
on and off the water!



2011 Go-Kart
Grand Prix

2011 Summer TT
Event Reports

Reuters
Newsflash

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

COMMENTS

from the ED



As I write this I am still recovering from the usual aches and strains of two days' of superb racing at the last Summer TT of the season at Grafham. It has been a summer season to savour with larger than average attendances (27 boats) at all the various events. Instow as usual hosted a brilliant Sport Nationals and The Nationals at Pwllheli were a triumph.

All of which suggests we are a Class in good shape. It's not by accident. It's down to a great deal of hard work from organisers and enthusiasm from participants who, despite some austere economic times, are turning out to take part in the fun. Which leads me to ponder - Why is this? What is it that defines The Sprint 15 family?

I know I can think of lots of things. No doubt you'll have your own ideas. From the camaraderie on and off the water, to the sportsmanship, healthy rivalry and an innate ability to not take ourselves too seriously. All of these defining qualities were contained in a comment which I overheard at Pwllheli. It was made by the PRO at the end of the prizegiving, presided over by Chairman Nick in his own unmatched style. As well as the serious prizes, there were, as usual, a goodly number of well crafted novelty awards. The place was packed to the rafters. (I've been to many such occasions, and you probably have too, when only those that were 'in the chocolates' plus a few more are in attendance.) Not on this occasion - everyone and anyone associated with the event was there. The atmosphere was rocking. No-one quite knew what to expect next. And the comment from the PRO? "We stage a lot of national events here at Pwllheli. So, I've been to a fair few prizegivings, but I've never seen anything quite like this - truly amazing!" That kind of summed it up for me.

My grateful thanks, as ever, to all those who have contributed to this issue. Without you it just wouldn't happen. Please keep the articles coming. It has been a pleasure to collect such a great variety. Our contributors, both regular and new, deserve a special mention for taking the time to put pen to paper.

And finally. Nine is my favourite number. It's a special number. If you want to know why, I'll be pleased to explain. Or ask Andrew Hannah at Thorpe Bay - he knows. This is my ninth issue since taking 'office'. So I thought I'd give the Mag. a slightly new look to celebrate. Hope you like it.

Enjoy your sailing and I hope we'll meet on the water before long.

George Love : 1825 : 'Fly-by-Wire'

Cover Design & Magazine Logo by George Love : CSC
Cover Photo : Mark Aldridge in superlative upwind action on Day 1 of The Nationals at Pwllheli by Pauline Love : CSC
Cartoons by Phil Breeze of Calshot

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YOUR CHAIRMAN WRITES....



I have been having this recurring bad dream for two decades.

In it, I fear that our class is in decline, our championship will never again attract the turnout it recently achieved, it will be impossible to 'volunteer' any replacements as enthusiastic for the committee, I have long ago lost the energy to do it all myself and some disruptive technology makes our class obsolete.

Then I wake up and realise this is rubbish. I had that eureka moment on returning from the Grafham Cat Open a week ago. This is the best test of popularity because all the cat classes attend, and it is in the middle of the country so easily reachable, which is why it is traditionally the largest cat event in Britain.

This year it attracted 116 entries, which is well down on what I remember from the past. Worse still, this year's turnout included the Dart 18 fleet, which had been large enough in the past to merit its own separate cat event. As an indicator of enthusiasm for cat racing, it suggests that this bad dream is not wrong in general – just wrong specifically for our class.

Afloat, I had been dimly aware there did seem to be quite a lot of sailors ahead of me, but it was not until the prize giving that I realised that there were just as many behind me – as usual.

Ashore it was not until I put on my UKCRA Chairman's hat to try and limit the collateral damage caused by some vandals over the weekend, that I realised our fleet was the largest – by far.

As you can see from the turnout graph, there were 37 of us, which was almost twice as much as the next biggest fleet – and that was also their Inland Championships, so the comparison was fair.

In the past, I have worried about other disruptive technologies. The Hobie 14 sold 60,000 worldwide versus 2000 of us, but none race in the UK. The asymmetric hulls of the Prindle 15 make it much faster, but Gerry Reeve is the only person on one at Grafham. The Catapult was a brilliant invention - better than our cat for car-topping - which I even backed with a little of my money, but only seven turned up.

The A-Class tops the technology league with every improvement one can imagine, but only eight turned up. Aping car companies, our own boat company has launched three successive products into the same

single-handed market, but there was no Sting, no Vortex and only one Dart 16 in sight there. Two of the finest cat builders have launched one-design single-handers hoping that people like us would upgrade, but there was not a single Hobie FX-One and only two Shadows there.

I have even put in time promoting a possible rival myself while wearing another hat, this time as Chairman of the RYA Cat Class Youth Steering Group. The plastic CX14 / CX 16 range is ideal for getting kids into cat racing, because we wouldn't want to trust our delicate fibreglass racing machines to them. Despite selling 200 of them on the Continent, they have not taken off in the UK, because some other countries treat sailing as a sport at school, while Britain does not.

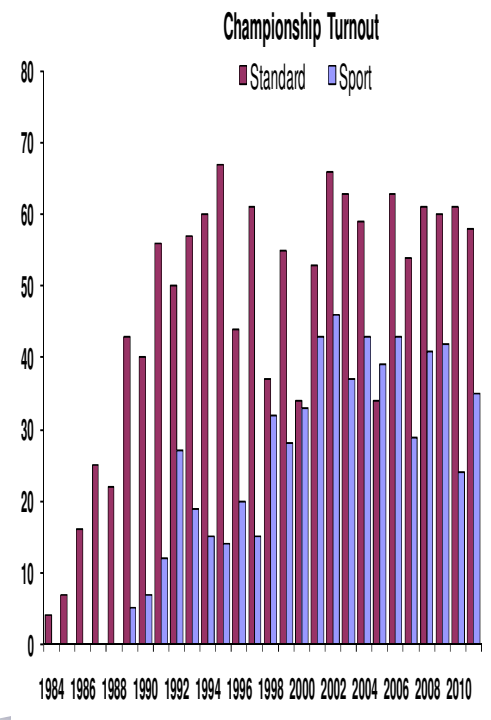
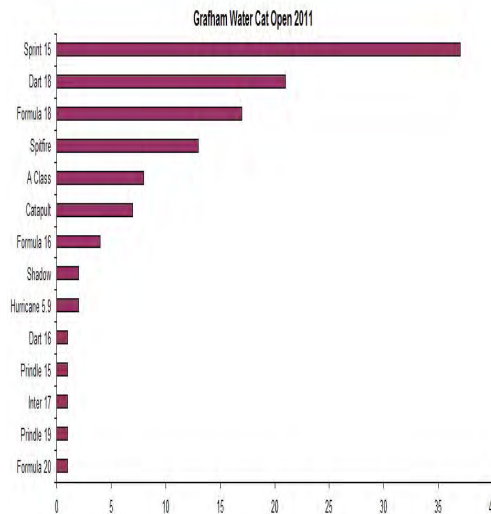
In my field it is fashionable to build theories on a single statistic – with disastrous consequences regularly for those who invest in it and occasionally also for the whole world, so it is possible we just got lucky at Grafham this year.

Therefore I have also done a little work on long-term time series, based on turnout at our national championships. This is a good popularity test because it is the most popular event we arrange, it is comparable over time and it has been possible to re-assemble the historical records.

Whatever may be happening to our branch of the sport elsewhere, as far as we are concerned the popularity of our national championship format has been essentially stable, with only four poor turnouts in fifteen years - as can be seen in the second graph. Our upgrade option started later, has not been as successful and has possibly peaked, but still attracted more than twice as many as the second most popular single-handed championship this year – that of the Dart 18 class.

I have not had the time to reconstruct records of our TT series, but that also continues with decent turnouts – 20 at Marconi, 27 at Shanklin, 24 at Seasalter, 28 at Carsington and now also 37 at Grafham.

So whichever way one dissects the statistics, our little cat seems to have some enduring quality and long may that remain the case – thanks to all our enthusiastic support. Why this should be the case is also an interesting subject, but one for another time. Why that should again enable us to survive disruptions in supply is also one for another time.



Nick Dewhurst

MARCONI TT *by David Ball*



The weekend of 16th and 17th April saw the opening 2011 Sprint 15 TT event hosted by Marconi Sailing Club on the River Blackwater and sponsored by Windsport Catparts.

10 local sailors were joined by 9 visitors from Beaver, Grafham, Stewartby, Brighlingsea, Queen Mary and Shanklin. Unseasonably warm and sunny weather was unfortunately accompanied by unseasonably light and variable winds. However, race officer Lee Harrison managed to complete the full schedule of 4 races over 2 days.

Race 1 kicked off just after high water. The first leg turned out to be a delicate beat up the south shore against the increasing tidal flow. David Ball (Marconi) led away from the start, pursued by Jon Postlethwaite (Beaver) and Jenny Ball (Marconi). Approaching the windward mark just off the club, the wind appeared to get more fickle whilst the current increased in the relative narrows between the shore and Osea Island. When a patch of breeze did appear the temptation for all competitors was to follow it further offshore, however the wind would the invariably switch off, leaving said competitor to drift rapidly back toward the start line whilst scrabbling to tack back in towards the shore. No one escaped unscathed from this frustrating cycle with the lead changing many times.

Peter Richardson (Marconi) and Nick Miller (Marconi) were the first boats to break from shallow water and attempt a final approach on the windward mark 100 yards from the shore. But the fickle breeze abandoned them just yards short of their goal. Finally David Ball and Postlethwaite completed the illusive first rounding almost side by side, with Jenny Ball close behind. They set off toward the wind mark on the Island shore opposite, setting a cautious up-tide course in case the wind should fail again – there would be no chance of tacking back to the mark if it was missed. Behind them, the patience of many other competitors was finally rewarded, with a little breeze appearing at the right time (for a change) to help them squeeze around the mark.

Down at the leeward mark, David Ball rounded just ahead of Postlethwaite and Jenny Ball. Heading straight back to the finish line against the tide was not an option, so all boats made straight for the shore again, from where it was possible to ease along in the shallow water. David Ball took the finish gun followed by Postlethwaite and Jenny Ball. Miller made up good ground to finish 4th, followed by Erling Holmberg (Shanklin) who led home the chasing pack.

Race 2 started with a promising force 2 breeze having built from the north west. The falling tide had also produced a wider band of shallow water and slower current for competitors to take advantage of when sailing against the flow. David Ball led around the first mark, followed by Jenny Ball, Kirby and Postlethwaite. These four boats stayed together around the 2nd (now windward) mark and down to the leeward end of the course, with the rest of the fleet close behind. David Ball headed slightly inshore for the fetch back to the start/finish line in the hope of avoiding the ever-present tide, whilst Jenny Ball, Kirby, and Postlethwaite opted to protect their clear air and sail the more direct route in deeper water. With the breeze holding, Race Officer Lee Harrison sent competitors on for a second lap, with David Ball just holding on to his lead from Jenny Ball by only 10 seconds at the finish, with Kirby, Postlethwaite, Kevin Dowley (Marconi) and Miller completing the top 6.

Race 3 started with the force 2 north westerly still holding out. This time it was Kirby who took the early lead at the first mark and headed a more tightly packed fleet out to the second mark. Kirby had built a commanding lead by the time he reached the 3rd and final mark, but the wind had not yet finished teasing this bunch of sailors and switched off just as he rounded. Turning his boat to point up-tide toward



Event winner Kevin Kirby receives the trophy from Marconi SC Rear Commodore Bryan Spencer & S15 Fleet Captain Fenella Miller

the finish had little effect. Kirby began to drift backwards on the tide whilst the rest of the fleet (with the tide still under them) were fast approaching. Kirby held his nerve and headed straight for the shore, initially drifting down-tide of the chasing pack, but reaching the vital shallow water and slack current first, and from there clawing his way back upwind whilst it was now everyone else's turn to point west whilst drifting east!

Behind Kirby, the chasing pack began to converge on the shallow water in one fairly tightly packed group. From here, the race effectively re-started in the shallow water and light-tonon existent wind. Jenny Ball and Dowley made the best of these tricky conditions to pull clear into 2nd and 3rd place, with George Stephen (Queen Mary) sailing with the jib in "Sport" mode also breaking ahead of the pack. Some intense individual battles developed on this final leg, with Holmberg and Matthew Brown (Beaver) in particular trading places just yards from the line and finishing only 10 seconds apart after an hour of sailing (and drifting).

After 3 mentally challenging races it was time to retire to the bar and a welcome hot meal prepared by Tina in the Marconi SC galley.

Sunday dawned with familiar sunny skies and light winds. The time had arrived for the popular figure-of-eight race around Northey and Osea islands, a regular and popular part of every TT at Marconi. At the start it fell to Jon Postlethwaite to give the locals a lesson in tidal sailing by sticking in the deep water and stronger current to good effect, whilst everyone else felt inexplicably drawn toward the Osea Island shore.

As the fleet approach Northey Island, Jenny Ball managed to pull out a clear lead, with Kirby close behind.

The beat home commenced with the last of the flood tide now holding competitors back. Those that tacked off into the shallow water on the south side of Northey Island made gains over the rest. By the time the leaders broke clear of Northey and headed off for the north side of Osea Island the tide had finally turned and was providing a welcome push home. To improve matters further, the wind had freshened to a more steady force 2-3.

Kirby managed to overhaul Jenny Ball on this return leg, with Richardson also putting in an excellent display up of upwind skill and boat-speed to catch the leaders, overtaking Ball and pressing Kirby all the way to the finish. George Stephen put the Sport rig to good use, crossing the line in 3rd place, and holding on to 5th place on corrected time.

When the results were tallied, Kevin Kirby came out on top, discarding a DNF from race 1 and scoring an impressively consistent 3, 1, 1 in very tricky conditions. David and Jenny Ball followed in 2nd and 3rd places respectively just 1 point apart whilst Jon Postlethwaite was the leading visitor in 4th place.

SEASALTER TEACH-IN *by Steve Willis*



The gods shone on us again

and provided excellent weather for early April and for the two-day training session at Seasalter SC.

We had the twelve boats attending (7 from SSC and 5 visitors) rigged and lined up abeam in the field for inspection by Nick, Kevin Dutch and Steve Willis. We then moved on to a discussion of the key points for trimming and fettling a boat for good performance. A quick resume by each of the helms elicited that most had some reasonable experience of sailing Sprint 15s but Mark Dowling, whilst an experienced sailor, had only purchased his Sprint over the winter and rigged it for the first time that morning. Whilst most had experienced capsize several had not. Racing tactics were of clear interest to most.

The three hour pre-sailing session revealed that most boats needed some tweaking particularly to foot straps and rudders with some demonstrations of how to improve boat handling by judicious tensioning and arrangement of the footstraps. A good few rudders were wrongly assembled and had worn or missing frame pads.

The winds were still showing some gusts and the fleet set afloat to do circuits in line. Martin Searle joined Jane Bainbridge on her boat to provide some one to one encouragement whilst Nick Dewhirst, Kevin Dutch and Mark Hollis patrolled the fleet to provide hints and tips on the best rig set up for each leg. Unfortunately towards the end we had one mishap with Rob Finch suffering a sudden gybe which took him straight into the forward port hull of Andy Carter and led to bow damage and a few other scrapes on both boats. With both having hulls filling with water they had to be brought ashore and Andy's boat was out of action.

Following a shower, drink and debrief of the sailing, Nick and Steve introduced the floor game in the club house to simulate the annual Seasalter long distance Fowley Island Race – and its special wind shifts and hazards. The hazards were only being introduced at stages during the game – much to the annoyance of those who thought they were sailing clear ahead on the best possible course! The helms soon learnt to listen to course instructions and to watch for the wind changes – plus learning to try and find out local vagaries causing wind shifts even under steady wind conditions. The unfortunate 'grounding' of two boats at Fowley Island led to further changes to the fleet order. The key messages imparted were : understand the course instructions, find out what you can about local wind and tide conditions and anticipate what other boats around you may do and take early action to avoid being forced off your chosen course.

An excellent three course evening meal provided by Lesley Stafford and Jane Mills was followed by a further floor exercise of getting ready at the start and sailing to the windward mark – with lots of discussion about rights of way and again anticipation of possible conflicts of courses sailed. Having had a long day, the evening finished with most people heading off to bed or a quiet drink in the bar.

Sunday morning saw Rob Finch making liberal application of Duck tape to his starboard bow and repairing his trolley that fell apart in sympathy with the boat whilst Steve Willis carried on doing individual boat inspections with their helms.

As soon as the tide was up the fleet set sail. The order of the day was to do as many single lap races as possible starting with a forced starboard start through varying angles of start line bias giving some interesting variations of starboard and port starts in the fleet. Despite the generally steady winds capsize practice occurred for a number in the fleet. Kevin accompanied Andy Bunyan and Derek Darley for a while and forced a capsize to give Andy his first experience – which he later repeated alone for good measure.

During the successive races the fleet order changed time with most helms having good and bad races and some interesting meeting and calls at the windward mark of port and starboard boats. It was apparent that some boats, and helms, need some more tweaking particularly for windward sailing with the highest boats sailing some 10-20 degrees higher than the lowest. Mark Dowling's boat was clearly able to point high with him achieving a single leg to the windward mark on one start.

By the end of sailing, the weekend's sun showed on nearly everyone's face. For most it was a new experience sailing on the traveller rather than the main sheet to keep the sail shape and, with footstraps pulled outboard, a few found that not using hiking pants can lead to some painful bruises to the upper thighs once you really get hiked out.

At the debriefing it was clear that everyone had enjoyed the weekend and had learnt some new things. There should be much fiddling with rudders and footstraps over the next week or so as well. Whilst not everyone is mentioned above, Nick, Kevin and I would like to thank all who turned up for the weekend - we enjoyed your company - and especially all the SSC members who helped out in the club house and on the water – the event was only possible with their assistance.



The happy band attending were:

Helm	Club	Sail No.
Peter Lytton		1221
Andy Bunyan	Stewartby	1289
Jon Finch	Stewartby	1890
Robert Finch	Stewartby	1838
Derek Darley	IOSSC	1991
Jane Bainbridge	Seasalter	1206
John Bainbridge	Seasalter	747
Andy Carter	Seasalter	640
Mark Dowling	Seasalter	1599
Ian Mills	Seasalter	424
Tim Seymour	Seasalter	1923
Rob Smith	Seasalter	857

2011 AGM REPORT *by Keith Bartlett*



Sprint 15 Association AGM Minutes Pwllheli Sailing Club : 13th August 2011

For those Association members who were present at this AGM and who had been on the water for the previous 4½ hours, may I offer hearty congratulations on both your fitness and staying power. (Though as no one asked any awkward questions, then maybe you were all not as alert as I had thought!). As I said last year, you need to get hold of a road atlas, so that you can identify the venue for next year's event - (see below).

The meeting got underway at 7.35pm, with almost a full committee present, the exception being your magazine editor, who tried to slip in quietly later. Just what had you been up to George??? (Sorry, Keith - got waylaid in Asda by a bit of Welsh Rarebit! I should have known that by being five minutes late for this event means that one misses about half of it - Ed.).

The Chairman made his usual erudite remarks which included something about winning a few and losing a few. I didn't know if he meant his positions in races or members or quite what.

Nick went on (and on!) ...Our Dart 15 brand had been downgraded during Laser's reign, but that once re-branded as Sprint 15, and under Brian Phipps' and Ian Fraser's guidance, the brand had been re-built.

In a move to help Sprint 15 sales in the UK, Nick proposed that the Sprint 15 Association fund the keeping of one new South African built 15 in stock at Windsport. Final details had yet to be agreed.

There then followed, in amazingly quick succession, the various reports from your committee members.

Howard (The Money) Hawkes, making his debut speech, ensured instant approval from the throng by saying that fees did not need to change and that the finances were still in a good state. Howard also explained the background to the DaVinci Robot Appeal, and strongly recommended all members to support it.

Bob (The Technical) Carter recommended the adoption of Brian's new adjustable con bar, to keep the rudders parallel. (The required vote took place later).

Erling (Events and Southern Lad) Holmberg confirmed Brightlingsea (River Colne on the Essex Coast and north up a touch from more familiar venues on the East coast) as the venue for next year's Nationals, starting 18th August 2012. A much-appreciated and very popular return to

Pentewan for 2013 was proposed. The meeting unanimously approved both venues.

The Sport Nationals will take place at Instow, on a date sometime in May 2012. Erling again confirmed the problems of finding venues that are prepared to take us during August.

Both the 2011 Winter and Summer Travellers' Series have had good attendances.

Ray (Northern Lad) Gall is retiring from the committee after 11 years of dedicated service and is being replaced by **Ed (Draycote) Tuite Dalton**. For putting up with Ray's sailing activities, his wife Liz was presented with a bouquet of flowers and thanks from the Committee. Ed was welcomed as the new Northern Rep. by committee and Class members alike.

Martin (Webmaster) Searle was once again thanked for keeping the Sprint 15 website at the forefront of sailing media and well in front of our rivals.

George (Magman) Love arrived just in time to confirm he would continue producing the Class Magazine 'Newsprint'.

Yours truly, (Membership) who has trouble both speaking and writing at the same time, said precisely the same as last year with something like 300 ish paid up members, 32 new members, of whom about half were bringing previously unseen boats into the Sprint 15 family. All reports were accepted and all Committee members were re-elected for another year.

Under our rules, the modification to the rudder-connecting bar required a vote- proposed by Bob Carter, seconded by George Love, and passed unanimously.

The formal part of the meeting ended at 8.00pm

Nick then invited Brian Phipps to give an update.

The con rod mod (£25) has also been approved by the Dart18's, who have hoovered up all of Brian's stock. Replacement stock is on its way and will be available via the Windsport website.

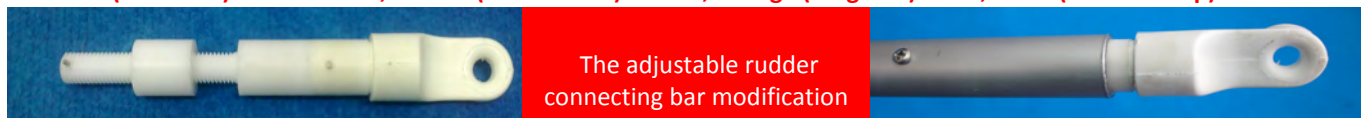
To date during 2011, two new South African built 15's have been sold to new members in the UK.

Much time has been spent in trying to improve both the response times from Collins Fibreglass and the quality of their production. Masts for Dart 18s are now being made in Europe and Dart 18 hulls may be built in Europe in the near future.



Class Association Committee of 2011-12 (left-right)

Nick (Chairman) Dewhirst ; Howard (The Money) Hawkes ; Bob (Technical) Carter ; Erling (Events & Southern) Holmberg ; Ed (Northern) Tuite Dalton ; Martin (Webmaster) Searle ; George (Magman) Love ; Keith (Membership) Bartlett



The adjustable rudder connecting bar modification

Undercover Report *by our Undercover Investigator*



Our investIGator was recently taking time off from surveillance duties. He was enjoying a well earned rest in the South West of England indulging himself in the delights of a gastronomic vacation at an undisclosed "Michelin Star" restaurant in the area. Whilst tucking in to his starter of "Confit De Foie De Canard, Cerises Amandes", he overheard Raymond Blanc raving about a new up and coming local North Devon chef who had applied to BBC "Master Chef" to compete for the 2012 title. As we all know our covert man lives and breathes the job 24/7 and he immediately recognised the name of said chef from investigation files remaining unsolved and still open from the 1990s. Our intrepid investigator was on the aroma or, in this case, the odour. What he subsequently found makes grim copy.

The Heasongate Tapes

Our unsavoury man was originally from the East Midlands (in the locale of Nottingham) and was formerly employed as a butcher working out of Melton Mowbray. He was wanted for questioning by the sheriff in connection with alleged counterfeit pork pies sold under a famous brand name at illicit 'saddle-bag sales' deep in the nearby forest and usually early on Sunday mornings. (It is rumoured that the sheriff couldn't get out of bed early enough to catch him after a Saturday night on the tiles.) The proceeds were lavished on a life of wine, women & boats. His modus-operandi bore no similarities with historical characters from the area who took a more philanthropic approach to their outlawed deeds. He kept the lot for himself! His hide-away was not, however, an ex-con's style villa in the Algarve so favoured by others previously investigated in this column. His was a heavily disguised luxurious canal boat called "Honk 1" which he moored in a quiet backwater of the Trent & Mersey canal.

It was whilst in disguise and running around in the undergrowth of Sherwood Forest in the middle of the night on a wild boar rustling expedition for new supplies of raw meat that he met and wooed his Maid (Marion) Bernadette. Quite why she was roaming around the woods at that time of night remains a matter of intense speculation and potential further investigation. Rumours that she was searching for her lost pet Siberian hamster seem spurious at best and remain unconfirmed. Bernadette was no ordinary beauty of the forest. He was no ordinary beast. She had a degree in Business Management and knew his current 'business' activities had little future. He had a HND in use of assorted cleavers.



She was in tune with the word on the toe-path. He was usually drunk. She knew it was only a matter of time before the net finally closed and the (pastry) case crumbled.

She could see the scratchings on the wall. There was a bad smell around the pork pie 'business' - (probably something to do with the meat 'past its sell by date'). She knew it was finished and that he had to get out before he got the chop!

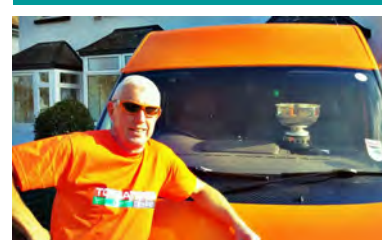
With the pie business on its uppers, crusty round the edges, too much heat in the kitchen & questions being asked, it was time to disappear. Our man and his new bride fled the Midlands and escaped south to a new life. But the future was bright - the future was orange! Our man took this quite literally. Before he was tango'd by the local sheriff, his not so merry men and their baying bloodhounds who would easily follow the scent of over-ripe trotter, he painted his get-a-way vehicle in a sudden shade of orange - his favourite hue! The faint hope was that he could masquerade as a soft drinks sales person or blend with the visiting grockles and their weird camper vans. It seemed to work.

His new master plan in place, he joined North Devon Yacht Club and became an upstanding person within the local community. To this end he also acquired a Sprint 15 and called it "Honk 2" to go with the rest of his shipping empire. But out on the water, whilst sailing "Honk 2", he is often prone to slipping back into his old outlaw disguise which has been modified to a more piratical, Jack Sparrow style of sartorial look to reflect his current maritime domain.

Life in the tropical south has fostered his latest passion for a BBQ. This has recently spilled over into grand designs of becoming a Michelin star chef, so he has actively enrolled in kitchen duties at the Club. Unfortunately the junior chefs working alongside this megalomaniac live in fear as traits of Gordon Ramsay chastising the hired help have been caught on CCTV. Our investigator reports that it is still a matter of conjecture as whether or not his club mates are aware of his culinary histrionics and chequered history.

Will the real truth ever come out, one wonders?

The photographic evidence :
'Honk1' on the canal :
The getaway vehicle :
The 'Johnny Depp' look :
The culinary histrionics



Some say that he breathes through a USB cable and that his brain is a Wi-Fi hotspot
.....all we know is - he's called our **Undercover InvestIGator!!**

SEASALTER TT *by Steve Willis*



A week prior to the event the forecast was for F3/4 westerly, but in the last few days before the Seasalter TT low pressure systems built and the Saturday dawned with forecasts, for both days, of heavy rain then showers and winds F5/6 with F7 gusts. So it was testament to the fleet that 18 travellers arrived to join 7 home boats for the event. Unfortunately John Holmes (1978, SSC) had his mainsail rip as he was hoisting and had to withdraw leaving us with 24 competitors.

Saturday saw two races with a trapezoid course set and an offshore committee boat start. Race 1 saw 23 boats start and Dutch (1938, SSC) take a lead over Holmberg (2007, Shanklin) and Hawkes (1643, Thorpe Bay) that was to be unbeaten. Dutch managed to build up enough lead to maintain first place despite a capsize that broke a rudder when he fell onto it, luckily jamming it in the locked down position, and he righted in less than a minute. Whilst the fleet spread out over the 6 laps there were some close battles in mid fleet. Robert Finch (1838, Stewartby) held 4th place after the first lap but lost ground allowing Goldstone (2004, Queen Mary) and Ellis (1981, Thorpe Bay) to come past but on the 5th lap brother Jon Finch (1890, Stewartby) managed to just pass Ellis and managed to hold place to the finish. Goldstone, J. Finch, Ellis and R. Finch took 4th-7th with only 16 seconds between the last three. A local derby followed with Hollis (1206, SSC) beating Seymour (1923, SSC) at the line with 3 seconds between them. Despite the conditions only Hurst (565, Grafham Water) had the misfortune not to finish the race. Damaging a rudder on setting out he returned ashore and borrowed an SSC rudder and set off again only to be dismasted when the forestay lashing came undone.

Race 2 saw the arrival of Dewhirst (2006, Whitstable), having had a good few glitches sailing over from Whitstable and 24 boats set sail with Dutch again taking an early lead but with Ellis in hot pursuit. This time recovery from a capsize by Dutch was not quick enough and Ellis took a 2 second lead at the end of the 2nd lap. This he extended until on the last lap Dutch managed to get a cleaner beat and turn for the tight reach to the line for 1st place followed home by Ellis. Rob Finch held 3rd for 2 laps before losing ground again to allow Holmberg and Jon Finch through and, in a very close battle, Jon Finch managed to pip Holmberg to the line in the last few yards to take 3rd by 2 seconds. Stephen (1594, Queen Mary) was the sole Sport mode entrant and followed 5th placed Rob Finch home by 2 seconds on the water to take 9th on handicap. Seymour held steady behind Hawkes through the whole race until the last lap, pulling past to take 6th over Hawkes' 7th. Smith (871) and Burrows (1871), both from Thorpe bay retired with one boat slightly damaged.

Despite the conditions a tired fleet returned ashore well satisfied with a good day's sailing despite some heavy rain and those severe gusts. After a good shower and a rest, the fleet joined SSC members and the race team for a hot and cold buffet prepared by Lesley Stafford (SSC) and her able band of galley and bar helpers followed by a leisurely evening in the clubroom and bar.

Day 2 saw forecasts with higher gusts but an apparent window in the weather during racing time. It was agreed to delay the start and hold two 40 minute races when conditions appeared suitable. The course was set and the fleet set out to the committee boat only to find the perceived lull was not to stay. The race started with some

very close action seeing Dutch cross the line first with his boat flying a hull at 45 degrees close to the starboard end and Ellis, trying to keep close, had nowhere to go and touched the mark, losing time doing his penalty. 23 boats started with John Bainbridge (747, SSC) capsizing and hurting his wrist and returned ashore with one of the race team helping sail his boat. Dutch was instead chased by Rob Finch and Holmberg for most of the race but came through to claim his third 1st of the event. Finch held off Holmberg by 4 seconds until the last lap and lost out again to follow Holmberg's 2nd taking 3rd. Ellis recovered from his penalty to steadily climb up from 7th to finish 4th. Dewhirst chasing Burrows followed Ellis through the front group and on the third lap passed to make it Dewhirst 5th and Burrows 6th.

Newcomer to both the fleet and the Sprint 15, Simon Hare (1970, Oxford) had sailed well throughout the races, without even a capsize, but suffered a coming together of an eyebrow and his mainsheet block during a gybe and, retiring, was helped ashore for minor medical aid.

The winds during the race gusted to the very top of F7 and 7 boats retired and with a number capsizing, stretching the limits of the patrol boat cover, it was decided to return the fleet ashore and review the conditions for a period. After an hour it appeared that the winds were dropping with max gusts of 30 and steady F4 so the committee boat moved to position for the last race. However, with it on the start line, thunder and a lightning strike were observed amongst a very black area to the west that had appeared within minutes. The last race was abandoned.

Kevin Dutch, with three first places took the event trophy with Erling Holmberg 2nd and Martyn Ellis 3rd. George Stephen took the Sport mode trophy.

Despite the wind conditions being near the limit, the wind direction (S/SW) provides near flat water at SSC and provided some extremely fast sailing. Sunday saw boats lapping in about 8 minutes on near enough the same course that took 10-12 on the Saturday. The Sprint 15 provides a very forgiving sailing platform and judicious use of the traveller position enabled even the newest members to the class, some on their first TT outing, to sail well in every race, with confidence, and experience the thrills that high wind catamaran sailing can yield. Several entrants were returning to SSC having taken part in the 2011 Sprint 15 training weekend for novices held at the club – quite a bit of progression in a short time.

The overwhelming response from the fleet was that it was a thoroughly enjoyable, if tiring, event. Thorpe Bay did us proud with the largest traveller contingent (7 boats). A big thanks from SSC to them and all the other travellers who came and made it a great weekend – as ever a great fleet spirit of camaraderie and fun. We hope to see you all again, preferably in more normal SSC conditions.

One message that we would like to pass on is that anyone in the fleet is welcome to contact us and come and join in with our club racing at any time – camping in the field if you wish. We have had visiting clubs in the past that want a 'holiday' venue for a long weekend for a group of members.

I know that a number of Sprint 15 sailors would have liked to take part in the 'beginners' training weekend in April but could not make it and we would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to attend a training session. Dependent on numbers and location the Association can decide on the best location for the next training events.

STEWARTBY TEACH-IN *by John Oakshott*



'C' grade trainers

arrive at their course with a bag of ideas, a few shock and awe tricks, spout their stuff and leave; 'B' grade trainers ask what the trainee wants to learn, agrees, and runs with same agenda they've been using for the last ten years. 'A' grade trainers blend what the trainees say they want with what they already know the trainees are going to ask for and what is possible. If any need to check this, attend a police speed awareness course.

'A+', then, for Brian Phipps - craftsman, author, Mr Windsport, and good egg - who led the April training course at Stewartby for the Association. We, seven trainees, were invited to say what we needed; Brian already anticipated pretty much what we would say, and he brought together the broad themes of race tactics, boat tuning, and boat handling into a package that attended to the key points: confidence on the race start line, skills at the race marks, boat speed up- and down-wind, and so on.

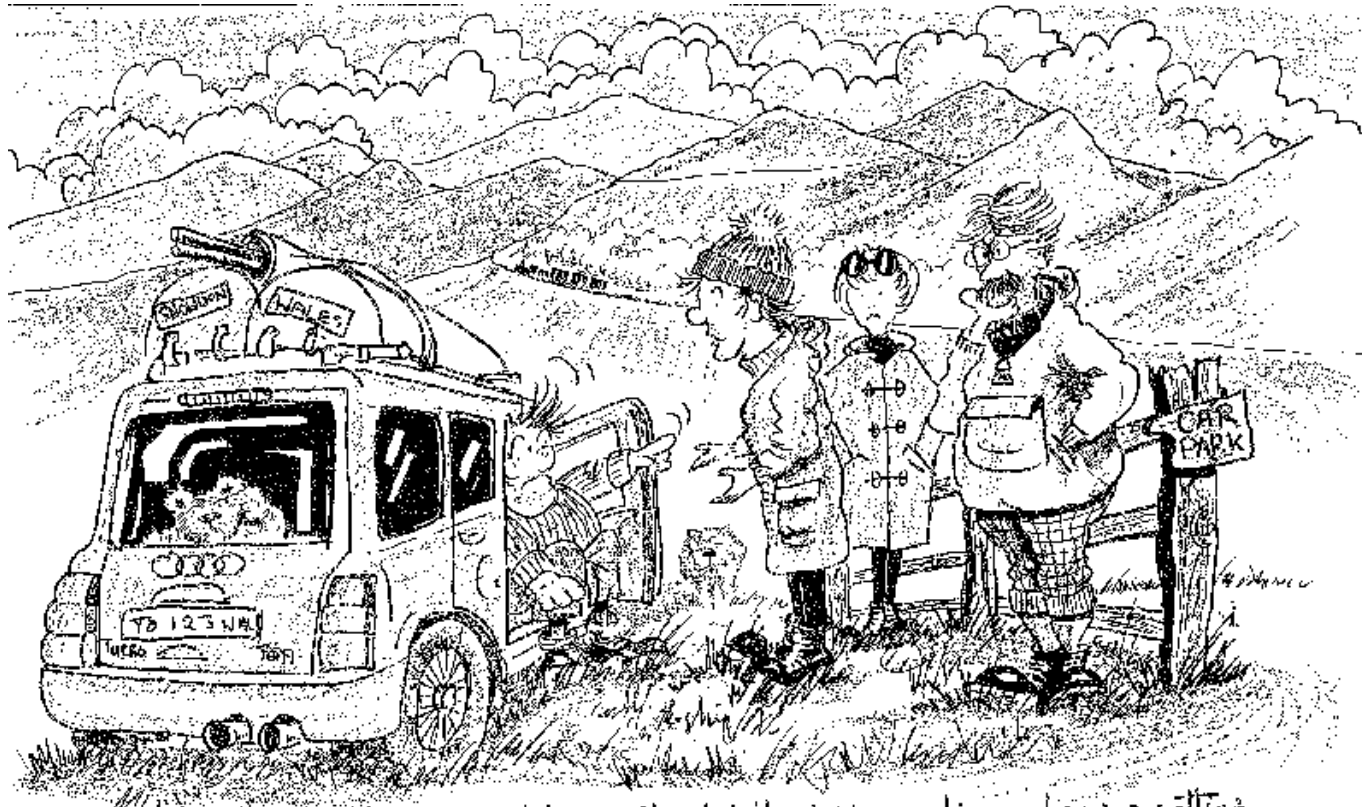
I've had a 25 year break from boat sailing and with very rusty skills, outdated knowledge and shaky confidence, I have it all to learn again. Others had varying experience; all were good sailors leaving me at the back for most of the weekend, but I learned - as Brian intended - from those around me and from his measured encouragement: 'The sail won't go out if you're kneeling on the mainsheet!' We'd brought our boats and arrived on Thursday and Friday at Stewartby, a friendly, informal little club, welcomed by club committee member and Dart sailor Mark Norman, who co-ordinated, operated the gate, arranged and managed, drove the rib, got the curry, and had a friendly

word with everybody. The weather was wet-suit warm and cloudless with light winds and puffs just enough for a capsize if we tried really hard.

We learned that at Olympic level, 75% of the success pie chart is boat handling, and tuning and tactics are the remaining 25% - a good reflection of what we'd asked for at the beginning. Brian took us through on-water exercises to focus on boat handling for control at the start line, timing to start effectively and very short-circuit racing. We had twenty or so short-order starts over the two days, with focus on defending the start position, rounding up and down wind, managing boat speed for best gains and sailing to race rules, all of which brought tactics into the key issue of confidence and competence in boat handling. As Brian said, we could do the weekend again and still learn a great deal from it, and he wowed us with a short session on tuning, servicing, changing mast rake on the water. Much of this is in the Catamaran Book and tips on the website, but like juggling, there's only so much you can learn from the book.

'What one thing have you learned?' We all referred to our initial request. I needed to say 'the whole works', but as tail-end-Charlie, I scrambled up one response and kept quiet. Driving home, my respect for Brian's training grew. He was positive and encouraging, his criticism constructive, and if my co-trainees got as much from the weekend as I did, we had very good value for the cost of the course. My thanks go to Brian Phipps, to Mark Norman and Bob Carter for making the training happen, and also a big 'thank you' to my co-trainees for your tolerance

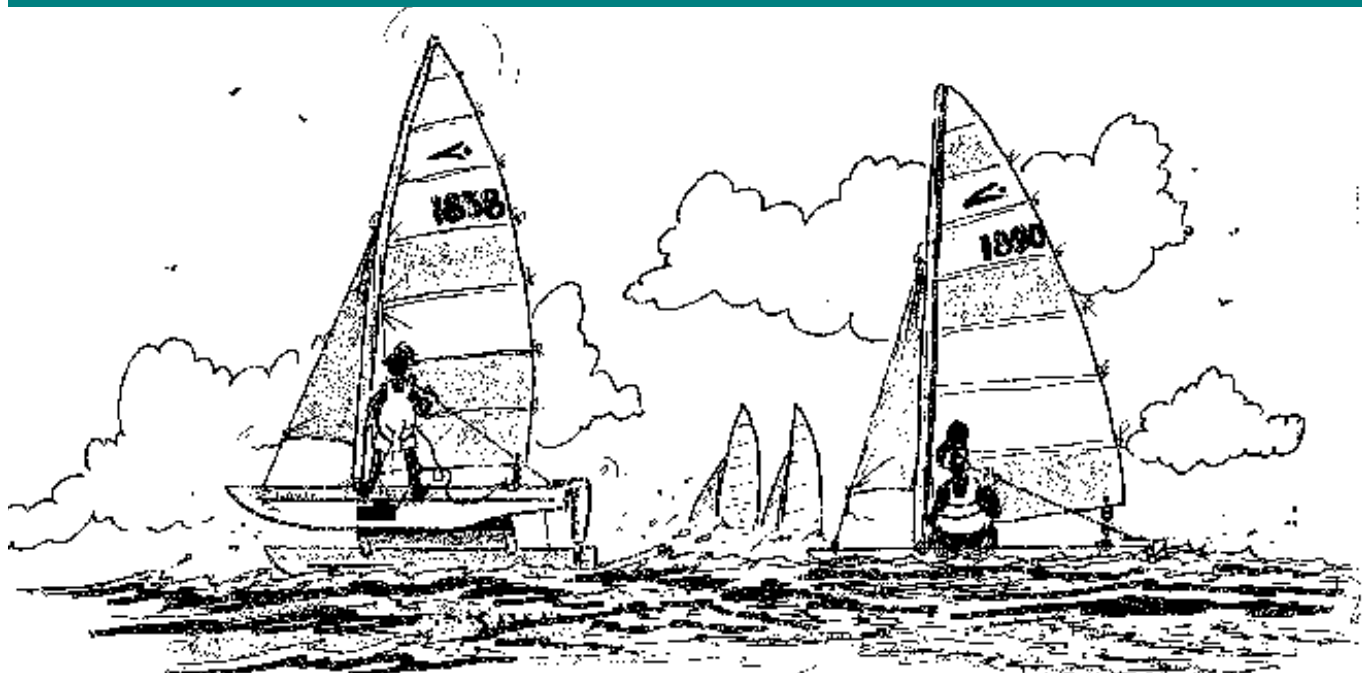




His name is Nick and he really did think it was his car he was getting into. We apologise to the lady for the language Nick used, but he is normally a very nice man.

So what's the story here? You can find out more on page 23

Brothers Robert and John Finch from Stewartby have been taking their sailing very seriously and their competitive spirit has been in great evidence. But who's taking it to extremes? You decide!



"I think Robert is doing better than John with the diet"

TIM SEYMOUR *(In Memoriam)* by Steve Willis



Tim Seymour 1964-2011 (Sprint 15 – 1923)

During a Seasalter club race on 17th September Tim Seymour, one of our best Sprint 15 sailors, suffered a sudden fatal heart attack whilst in his favourite place – leading the race, skimming a hull fully hiked out on a broad reach. Despite all the valiant efforts of club members and the emergency services Tim could not be revived.

Tim was a lifelong sportsman driven to excel in whichever sport he took up. In 2007 he first arrived at SSC with his friend Mark Kempson who had joined us with 1259. Tim was taken for his first cat ride and was immediately smitten with the Sprint 15 - enough to give up kite surfing, join SSC and purchase 1923 within weeks. Despite some hilarious mishaps in his first season, leading to the award of the special 'Legends' trophy, he was soon making his way in the fleet and at the end of 2008 became the club's Most Improved Helm for the year.

With our strong fleet and the benefit of the Sprint 15 TTs and training weekends he rapidly became a real trophy challenger. In 2010 he won his first club series trophy but was so disgusted that it was such a small cup he redoubled his efforts and during 2011 had already won six club series trophies – including our two biggest cups.

Sailing was his passion and he had only flown back from visiting family in Germany shortly before the fateful day – just to make sure he did not miss a sailing weekend. Whoever arrived at the club thinking they were first on a sailing

day would find Tim's old Series 3 Land Rover, Elsie, in the car park and the tea urn on. Tim would be on the beach rigging his boat. He loved high winds in which he excelled – however in light winds impatience got the better of him and he was often seen to throw his tiller down in despair and slink back to the shore, retiring, if it was dropping below F3.

Off the water Tim was a good friend to many club members and had become an integral part of our club family. Needless to say his death has left a significant impact. Tim leaves behind his mother Carolyn, siblings Charlotte and Tom, and his three children Paul, Lydia and Gabriel. Following his cremation service a celebration of his life was held at SSC on 27th September where over 100 friends and family gathered for the setting sun and to drink a toast to our departed friend.

His family has expressed their deepest thanks to all SSC members and our visiting Sprint 15 sailors who made up such a large part of Tim's life over the last 4 years - and for the very generous donations that have been made to the RNLI Whitstable in memory of Tim. We hope they will keep in touch and visit the club from time to time.

We will miss Tim and his keen sense of humour but there is some solace in knowing that he went quickly and was doing what he loved best – skimming that hull on the waves hiked out on a broad reach in an F5. It is such a shame that he never got to receive his highest, and largest, club award – Helm of the Year 2011 – but it, and his other trophies, decorated his coffin. RIP



Tim (in blue) with Seasalter buddies (L-R) Stuart Bligh, Andy Carter and John Dutch



SHANKLIN TT *by Erling Holmberg*



**Was it
windy?**

**Was it
ever!**

With sponsorship from Wightlink Ferries, Shanklin Sailing Club hosted the Sprint 15 Southern Championships. A total of 27 competitors were entered for the event and in near perfect conditions on the Saturday, with a flat sea and a southerly force 3 wind, race officer Martin Harrison set the course way out in Sandown Bay with an approximate windward leeward distance of 2 miles. Laying the course markers did present some problems, due to the depth of water, but when the first race got under way Paul Grattage elected to sail the first leg of the course inshore to escape the tide and rounded the windward mark first with Sean McKenna second and Simon Giles in third position. The first three positions remained unchanged although on the second downwind leg these 3 were overtaken by Robin Leather, sailing in "sport mode", and he eventually won the race on handicap, with Grattage second and McKenna third.

The second race again saw the race officer struggle to set the course with the very strong ebb tide pulling at the marks. McKenna was first around the windward mark with Leather second and Giles third, but with the main and jib configuration of Leathers' boat it gave him the advantage on the downwind leg of the course. Leather was first, McKenna second and Giles third.

The third Saturday race again saw Leather first, with Robert England, also sailing in "sport mode" second, and McKenna third.

The Saturday evening was just a quiet get-together in the club house, with the competitors re-running the races and sorting out "who should have won" and "what should have happened" whilst munching on the delights of the ample barbeque served by the ever abusive Stuart Pierce and washed down with what-ever took their fancy.

Weather conditions on Sunday had deteriorated and with the availability of bacon sandwiches, and mugs of tea and coffee from the kitchen, many competitors decided that staying ashore might be a better option. However, as with all events like this, many of the participants had forgotten to bring their brains and set about getting ready to sail.

Sunday's race was sailed in survival conditions, with gusts of 42 knots recorded, although most of the time it was just a steady 29 knots. Only 12 idiots (sorry, competitors) started, with Charles Watson making the best start closely followed McKenna and Dr. Simon Giles (you'd think he'd know better!). At the windward mark Watson capsized whilst tacking leaving McKenna ahead of Giles and Keith Newnham, but on the downwind leg McKenna executed the near perfect pitch-pole capsize, flying spectacularly through the air as though on a trapeze (but he still ended up in the sea), Newnham managed to gybe around the leeward mark ahead of Giles, and then went on to steal the win with Watson second, after righting his boat, and Giles third. Only 7 boats managed to finish, the rest were picked up by the highly efficient rescue squad who seemed to be hanging around like a flock of hungry vultures.

At the presentation of the results, Shanklin Sailing Vice Commodore, Simon Giles thanked the clubs Rear Commodore, Lynda Richardson, for her part in keeping all the competitors fed and watered, the race officer Martin Harrison, for his excellent courses, made under difficult conditions, and all of the safety boat personnel for their hard work over the weekend and especially on the Sunday when they were pushed almost to the limit.

The overall results of the Southern Championship was Robin Leather first, Sean McKenna second and Simon Giles third.

Just to add insult to injury, on the way back to the ferry a tree had blown down in the wind (wind, what wind?) and so a long detour was in order, but as the Isle of Wight is so massive it put another 3 minutes on the journey time.

GIRL POWER *by Kay Bowen*



Our Sprint 15 'Bat Cat' is nominally Rob's, but I see it as my boat, really-just don't tell him. As my confidence has grown on the water and even off it, as I attempt to rig it 'all by myself', I am making it one of my missions in life to increase the confidence and number of 'lady helms' on cats. Our club (Netley) is full of Dart 18s and lots of females who crew, but think that helming is too tough or tricky, or just lack the confidence to have a go. Some of the 18 helms have worked really hard to rectify this, offering to take out assorted women to have a go at helming an 18. I had a go myself, and all went really well until I misunderstood the term 'gybe' for the term 'tack'. Easily done, they sound very similar, and at the end of the day, do almost the same thing!

I have joined the lady helm campaign on the shorter, but more perfectly formed 15, taking out any female I can on 'Bat Cat' in light winds and sunny days (we get lots of those) and letting them 'have a go'. One recent sunny day at the club, I clocked up 5 friends sat on the boat with me (not all at once), all female, and all hopping off back at shore with a bit more confidence than before – sometimes it's their first sail on a cat, and sometimes their first ever helm, and sometimes both! Within about 5 minutes on the boat watching me and

crewing, they soon figure out that they could do a better job – and I have exhausted the sum total of all my sailing knowledge, having used all the technical jargon I know within the first thirty seconds using words like stick and rope to describe the important bits. My own sailing is still 'ropey' to say the least, and I still love going out with Rob as a heavyweight crew on windier days and learning from him. My mark rounding / rules of the road are so scant that helming in a race is still a target for me to achieve. But going out solo, finding out for myself what the boat does in what direction is fun, but doing it with someone else and 'teaching' (I use that term loosely) really helps me to embed my own understanding. Hannah is crewing for Rob again this year at the nationals, and I have persuaded a dinghy sailing female friend to helm with me as crew. So although we will be well overweight in the 2 up fleet, I am looking forward to being out on the water in Pwllheli. Hopefully it won't be long before Fenella wins her 'lady helm' crown each year against some competition! The only problem is, with Hannah growing up and catching up with me sizewise, she will need her own 15, then one for me, and Rob might want to get a look in – we will need a fleet of our own!



Howard flying high at Pwllheli for the Robot Appeal

Addenbrookes Robot Appeal.

Many thanks for all those who generously contributed a total of £162.50 at the Nationals.

For those who didn't hear my spiel at Pwllheli, Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge is one of the leading centres for treating prostate cancer through robotic keyhole surgery. The current Da Vinci robot is nearing the end of its useful life and the purpose of the appeal is to raise £1.1M for a replacement robot.

Next year's project is a Southampton-Cherbourg race (not in Sprints!) which this year raised £20,000 for the charity. Watch this space!

Howard Hawkes : 1643.

2011 SPORT NATIONALS



2011 Sport Champion Paul Grattage

Keith Heason in the groove

Annette Maddison shows the way to the windward mark

Brian Phipps hunts down Kevin Dutch



With a great deal of anticipation, 35 sailors turned up for the Sprint 15 Sport Nationals on the weekend of the 10th–12th June. The event was hosted by North Devon Yacht Club (NDYC) at Instow who were delighted with such a good turnout considering the economic climate and Instow's remote location.

Day 1 Race 1

The weather forecast for the first day's racing said a steady force 2 which would have been fine if it had materialised. In fact what the sailors got was no wind at all for the scheduled race start time. After a postponement of 50 minutes, a very light breeze kicked in that at times shifted 90 degrees and usually as sailors approached the windward mark and wing mark. The first beat was a messy affair with the wind coming and going and a great deal of concentration was needed to keep the boat moving. Steve Sawford was first to round the windward mark and set up a nice little lead for himself until the second lap when he set off to the wing mark again, forgetting that the race officer has set a triangle, sausage, triangle course. This allowed the chasing pack of George Love, Keith Heason, Annette Maddison, Erling Holmberg and Dane Stanley to reel Sawford in. The wind had now strengthened and places changed frequently. However it was Annette Maddison's superb sailing and lighter weight which gave her the edge. Maddison crossed the line just yards ahead of Sawford closely followed by Love, Holmberg and Heason taking fifth spot. Whilst waiting for the rest to cross the line the weather took a dramatic turn. Out of nowhere a force 6+ sprung up with gusts up to force 8 and driving rain. With visibility down to just yards and no sign of it letting up, the race officer Richard Stone decided that a second race was not an option and the fleet were instructed to return to shore.

That evening the club hosted a BBQ and sailors dined on top quality Organic Burgers and Sausages. There was also a chicken wing 'cook off' between home sailors, Alyzon Mayoh and Sam Heaton to see who could cook the tastiest wings. Mayoh was the winner preferring fresh ingredients as opposed to the jar of Heaton.

Day 2 Races 2, 3 & 4

Day 2 was always going to be a hectic affair, with the race officer under pressure to get in as many races as possible. As the sailors left the beach the wind did not look promising as the sailors made their way to the committee boat. A special "thank you" must go to David Graham NDYC Commodore for allowing the club to use his lovely boat Carol Ann to be used as the Committee boat - always a risky business at any Nationals when the stakes are so high. As usual Instow delivered half way through the third race as the wind kicked in and all sailors were sailing with huge grins on their faces as they all hooked on and swung out on the wire. It was Brian Phipps (Mr. Windsport) who made the most of the conditions. Brian had arrived as usual with his support trailer packed with spares for repairs and a brand new out of the box Sprint 15. The temptation was too much and the new boat was soon on the water with Brian doing very nicely 'thank you' to take the gun from Paul Grattage (Shanklin) whilst Mark Aldridge (Mr. Grafham) claimed third place.

By now the wind had increased to a good force 4+ with all that goes with it. After a very exciting start where all you could hear were sailors shouting "up, up, up", the race got off to a cracking start and all were soon out on the wire heading for the windward mark. Places changed fairly regularly as sailors made use of the wind and tide to gain an advantage. These were perfect conditions for the Flying Dutchman- Kevin Dutch (Seasalter).

by Keith Heason



Dutch claimed his only win of the weekend, Phipps took second and Sawford was third.

Soon after the end of race 3 the sailors were all put under starters orders so that the third race of the day could be started. The wind had settled down to a steady force 4 but the tide was now on the turn creating a different set of sailing conditions. These conditions were obviously to the liking of Paul Grattage who read and adapted to the conditions and crossed the line to take the honours. Sawford followed closely behind. Holmberg using his slight weight advantage did not have to go out on the wire throughout the race recorded a creditable third. On returning to the beach the tired sailors were treated to a Pimms Happy Hour supplied in 2 huge watering cans courtesy of Brian Phipps of Windsport. There were more than a few squiffy sailors on the beach by the time they had de-rigged their boats. Thank you, Brian.

Windsport's ongoing support and sponsorship of the class is not only through attending key events and providing technical support. A brand new Sprint 15 mainsail donated by Windsport was handed over to Erling Holmberg (Events Secretary) for safe keeping and will be presented to a lucky Sprint 15 sailor later in the year. To stand a chance of being that lucky sailor you need to attend as many Sprint 15 events as you can. The more you attend the greater your chance of winning.

On Saturday evening the competitors and their wives and partners were treated to a three course supper in the club house as the sun set over the estuary.

Day 3 Race 5

As Sunday dawned things did not look too promising, pouring rain and a good force 4+ with gusts providing quite a contrast from the previous day's sunshine and blue skies. The race officer informed sailors that there was only going to be one race run, so it was all to play for. Due to the change of the wind direction, the start was just off Crow Point. This caused most of the fleet problems as it is where the tide is at its strongest. However, all sailors coped well with conditions but it was home sailor Sam Heaton who excelled - (was it local knowledge I wonder)! Disaster struck half way through the race and the wind dropped off leaving the sailors with quite a task on their hands. The race officer shortened the course and Sam Heaton held on to his sizable lead. Dutch was second and Aldridge third.

All the sailors returned ashore tired but happy. Back at the club house, David Graham (Club Commodore) presented prizes and accepted speeches from the winners. Windsport provided a range of additional prizes including a set of their new range of skeg protectors, the "Mega Skeg Protectors", great for big wheel trolleys, and the compact skeg protectors, along with Windsport pre-stretch toe straps and other useful bits and pieces for a Sprint 15.

A huge thank you must go to all the race organisers and rescue boat crews that contributed their time and effort in what, at times, were pretty appalling conditions. The club house helpers were also deserved of appreciation for their hospitality. Without all these willing volunteers hosting such a huge event would not be possible.

Once again Instow proved that it is possibly the finest venue to sail a Sprint 15 in sport mode and without a doubt the friendliest club on the circuit. We look forward to seeing you all again next year. If sailing a Sprint 15 in Sport mode is your game then Instow is the name.



Race Officer, Richard Stone

Tactical discussion amongst the front runners

2011 Sport Champion Paul Grattage with the spoils

Pimms on the beach courtesy of sponsor "Windsport"



Sponsors of the
2011 Sprint Sport
Nationals

2011 NATIONALS



2011 Top Guns

**Champion
Kevin Dutch**

**Runner-up
Stuart Snell**

**Third
Mark Aldridge**



**Fourth
Paul Grattage**

**Fifth
Robin Newbold**



The Windsport Catparts Sprint 15 National Championships

returned to Pwllheli after a 6-year break, with a strong turnout of 58 boats. Considering that there are no 15's at Pwllheli, this was a fantastic result and a tribute to Erling's marketing of the event. Subsequent entries on the chat pages quickly showed the Association's appreciation of the venue for both competitors and families. A good number of sailors were competing in their first Nationals, which shows that both the venue and the format are attractive to a wide range of folk. The number of two up boats also showed an increase over previous years, giving, in many cases, an opportunity for our younger family members to see how good "Dad" is in the heat of true competition.

Starting on Saturday afternoon, with a 17-20 knot NW breeze, and some lumpy seas, the one lap practice race gave competitors a good taste of what hazards the trapezoidal course had to offer. Race 1 saw the top helms quickly power themselves into a commanding lead, as they relished in the boisterous conditions. The leading bunch of Mark Aldridge, Kevin Dutch, Paul Grattage and Erling Holmberg established a 400-yard lead over the rest of the chasing bunch, and Aldridge took the gun after 3 laps with Dutch chasing hard some 100 yards astern. Former heavyweight, Erling Holmberg clearly liked the going, and came in 3rd to record his best result of the event. The testing conditions in the chop caused some boats to head back for shore after Race 1, including some two up boats, who found that some of their young crews had become very cold during the delay after the practice race.

Chase boats had to be despatched to recall the majority of the fleet, due to a postponement with just 2 ½ minutes to go in the count down sequence for Race 2. Unknown to the fleet, the delay was caused by a wandering pin end buoy, which had to be re-layed. Race 2 eventually started in slightly less windy conditions, and Dutch got the bit between his teeth and took the lead from the gun. The 1 mile slog up the beat was testing for all, as was the wild ride to marks 2 & 3, which sorted out the pond sailors from their sea based counterparts. Once again the leading bunch, joined this time by Stuart Snell, built up a commanding lead over the rest of the pack. Dutch had the race well sewn up and crossed the line ahead of Aldridge, Grattage and Snell. Races 1 & 2 gave the two -up boats their best chance to compete and father and daughter combo of Simon and Lily Giles notched up two 8th places. The fleet had been out on the water since 1.00pm and not returning till 5.30 pm ish, there were a lot of aching limbs. Some of which were undoubtedly nursed back to life in the bar afterwards.

The ever-popular Pro Am competition kicked off on Sunday (Day 2), with pairings based on Saturday's results for Races 1&2. Quiet hints and advice could be detected, as pairings tried to work out what and how to improve their race positions. Grey skies and a 9-10 knot westerly breeze greeted competitors at the start of Day 2. The much less agitated sea state was appreciated by most of the competitors. With 3 races and a lunch break to fit in, time was at a premium. The wind picked up to 11 knots for Race 3, but the fleet had failed to notice the impact of the tide, which swept most of them well over the line for the first of two general recalls, before the Race Officer hoisted the black flag (for the first time ever in a Sprint 15 Nationals).



Sponsors of the
2011 Sprint
Nationals



This restored order and the fleet got away cleanly. (Note these delays greatly helped our chairman, who had made his usual late start from the beach, and arrived just in time for the re-start). The wind swung around several times, and the mid fleeters found their positions changing depending on which side they had taken on the beat. Aldridge had worked his way past Dutch, and led him home after 3 laps to win Race 3.

After a clean start for Race 4, the wind dropped back to 6-7 knots, and progress for all slowed dramatically. With the first lap taking over 30 minutes for the leading boats, the race was shortened to 1 ½ laps and was finished at mark 2. The lighter wind saw a change in the leading boat, with David Ball recording his first win of the event. Both Dutch (17th) and Aldridge (12th) lost out to lighter helms on the long, long downwind leg. The fleet returned to the beach for a quick lunch break.

After a well-earned break, the fleet came out to a freshening 17 knot westerly breeze. This again favoured the heavier helms, who had to work very hard on the 1.1mile beat up to the windward mark. The mid fleet boats were taking 25-30 minutes per lap, so the race was shortened to 2 laps. Keith Newnham took good advantage of an excellent start – just how did he hang so close to the line to squeeze into 3rd place, behind Dutch and the winner Aldridge?

Monday (Day 3) started with sunshine and an 11knot westerly wind. With 5 races already completed, but still with all to play for in the Championship, the morning's races were going to be hotly contested. Race 6 would have started promptly, but almost all of the fleet again misjudged the tide and after 1 general recall, the black flag was displayed for a 2nd time in the Championships. However, in the melee at the favoured pin end of the line, event leader Aldridge had become trapped on port and was holed in a port starboard incident. Grafham Water teammate Frank Sandells generously offered Aldridge his boat. On the re-start, Dutch made a perfectly timed run on port at the pin end of the line and crossed in front of the whole fleet. However he was made to work very hard by Paul Grattage,

who had consistently faster downwind speed. In the closest finish of the Championships, Dutch beat Grattage by two boat lengths, with Snell some yards behind.

Sadly, Aldridge hadn't found the same boat speed in his swapped boat for Race 6, and for the start of Race 7, he had switched back to his original mount, which was by now completely waterlogged in the starboard hull, so Aldridge sensibly decided to retire, and with it went his chance of winning the Championship. The wind had dropped and shifted towards the west and mark 2 was now the windward mark, for Race 7, the final and Championship deciding race. After the first lap, three boats were in very close contention, with Snell holding a few boat lengths lead over Dutch and the lighter weight Robin Newbold. The wind continued to slowly drop, and after the 2nd, very slow lap, the race was shortened with Snell taking his first win of the week, over Dutch 2nd and Newbold 3rd.

With his 2 firsts and 4 2nd places, Kevin Dutch from Seasalter became the new 2011 Sprint 15 National Champion from last year's winner, Stuart Snell.

The Sprint 15 fleet would like to thank all at Pwllheli Sailing Club for running such a great event, coupled with their Welsh hospitality and humour.

Special Trophy Results - Overall individual results are on page 20

Two-up	Simon & Lily Giles	Shanklin SC	60 pts
First Junior	Jacob Aldridge	Grafham SC	146 pts
First Ladies	Bethan Davies & Kay Bowen	Netley SC	189 pts
First Heavy weight	Martyn Ellis	Thorpe Bay SC	45 pts
First over 60	Stuart Snell	Grafham SC	14 pts
Pro Am	Richard Philpott & Gordon Goldstone		155 pts

At the Sprint 15 Nationals, me and my dad sailed a spare boat belonging to our friends (and rivals) Charles and Elenya Watson. This was because my mum was using our boat, "BATCAT", to crew for our friend Bethan who had somehow been convinced by my dad that sailing a catamaran at a national championship was the perfect way to learn about cat sailing. During every single race I was frozen to the bone, but it was still fun. What was not fun was my dad nearly being sick off the back of the boat! We found out a lot of people were sea sick, including my mum and dad but not me! An unfortunate thing was that on two occasions there were two general recalls and we got great starts on both of them and rubbish starts when it was finally



By Hannah Bowen



the actual race. At one point on one race we were neck and neck with mum and Bethan on a reach and it was great fun trying to beat them to the mark. We had a few technical problems with the borrowed boat and I had to steer for a bit on a run while my dad repaired the jib block which had broken off. We actually gained some places on that run when I was steering. The showers were really warm which is always good. It was wonderful seeing old friends from last year. My sister Amy spent the 3 days bodyboarding and making sandcastles so she was happy as this is one of her favourite hobbies. I guess this is a long explanation, but what I am trying to say is that -

The Nationals were AWESOME!

2011 NATIONALS GALLERY



by Pauline Love



2011 NATIONALS

Results

Pos	Helm	Sail No	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Pts
1	Kevin Dutch	1938	Seasalter Sailing Club	2	1	2	-17	2	1	-2	8
2	Stuart Snell	1982	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-5	4	3	3	-7	3	1	14
3 ¹	Mark Aldridge	19	Grafham Water Sailing Club	1	2	1	12	1	-15	-59	17
4 ¹	Paul Grattage	1456	Shanklin Sailing Club	4	3	-9	2	6	2	-7	17
5	Robin Newbold	991	Carsington Sailing Club	-15	5	-21	4	9	7	3	28
6	Keith Newnham	1150	Shanklin Sailing Club	9	-10	7	6	3	4	-12	29
7	Paul Roberts	1054	Penmaenmawr Sailing Club	-11	11	10	5	-11	6	5	37
8	Erling Holmberg	2007	Shanklin Sailing Club	3	6	14	7	8	-37	-28	38
9	David Ball	1488	Marconi Sailing Club	6	12	-12	1	10	12	-30	41
10	Martyn Ellis	1981	Thorpe Bay Yacht Club	7	11	11	-20	5	11	-14	45
11	Richard Philpott	1988	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-21	19	4	-27	12	10	8	53
12	Simon Giles & Lily Giles	1944	Shanklin Sailing Club	8	8	-48	13	14	-31	17	60
13	Kevin Kirby	1966	Marconi Sailing Club	13	15	6	-39	18	-20	9	61
14	Peter Slater	1627	Draycote Water Sailing Club	-33	20	-27	9	27	5	6	67
15	Stuart Pierce	1813	Shanklin Sailing Club	14	13	-34	-28	4	17	21	69
16	Howard Hawkes	1643	Thorpe Bay Yacht Club	22	21	5	-32	13	-27	16	77
17	Keith Ball	1937	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-30	-59	24	11	26	9	10	80
18	Neil Parkhurst	1761	Beaver Sailing Club	-31	-34	13	18	24	16	13	84
19	Andrew Gregory	1958	Stewartby Water Sports Club	24	22	-26	22	-25	14	4	86
20	Nick Dewhirst	2006	Whitstable Yacht Club	16	7	-31	-44	16	26	22	87
21	David Groom	1714	Highcliffe Sailing Club	-29	14	15	19	-29	23	18	89
22	Peter Richardson	1983	Marconi Sailing Club	-28	26	19	-36	17	8	20	90
23 ¹	Ed Tuite Dalton	1940	Draycote Water Sailing Club	17	9	33	-35	21	-40	11	91
24 ¹	Liam Thom	554	Shanklin Sailing Club	10	18	-30	25	-28	19	19	91
25	George Love	1825	Carsington Sailing Club	-44	-36	8	15	23	18	32	96
26	Gordon Goldstone	2004	Queen Mary Sailing Club	19	-43	-39	8	22	30	23	102
27	Robert England	1351	Carsington Sailing Club	18	16	17	-38	30	24	-38	105
28	Matthew Brown	1977	Beaver Sailing Club	39	-59	25	16	-59	21	15	116
29	Frank Sandells	1986	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-49	27	23	23	19	29	-31	121
30	Jon Finch	1890	Stewartby Water Sports Club	35	23	16	-50	-40	28	29	131
31	Robert Finch	1838	Stewartby Water Sports Club	25	28	28	-43	20	32	-34	133
32 ¹	John Shenton	1956	Shanklin Sailing Club	-45	38	18	-51	42	13	24	135
33 ¹	Eamonn Browne	1861	Marconi Sailing Club	32	24	29	24	-32	-34	26	135
34	Kevin & Mitchell Morris	1560	Grafham Water Sailing Club	23	-59	20	47	-59	22	27	139
35	Steve Petts	1934	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-48	39	-47	10	33	25	33	140
36	Jacob Aldridge	1989	Grafham Water Sailing Club	-46	31	22	42	15	36	-59	146
37 ¹	John Manning	1955	Beaver Sailing Club	34	25	-41	37	31	-42	35	162
38 ¹	Charles Watson & Elenya Watson	1237	Halifax Sailing Club	27	30	38	30	-39	-50	37	162
39	George Stephen	1594	Queen Mary Sailing Club	38	35	35	14	43	-59	-59	165
40	Kevin Parvin	1615	Penmaenmawr Sailing Club	26	33	32	-46	37	-47	39	167
41	Gary Burrows	1871	Thorpe Bay Yacht Club	20	29	-52	49	35	-51	43	176
42	Steve Roberts	1910	Penmaenmawr Sailing Club	42	45	37	21	-47	33	-59	178
43	Ian Parkhurst	1293	Beaver Sailing Club	-59	-59	40	45	36	39	25	185
44 ¹	Bethan Davis & Kay Bowen	1348	Netley Sailing Club	-59	-59	45	26	34	38	46	189
45 ¹	Jan Elfring	1913	Draycote Water Sailing Club	36	37	-44	40	41	35	-42	189
46	Ray Gall	1914	Carsington Sailing Club	37	-59	-49	31	38	44	45	195
47	Christine Roman	1925	Shanklin Sailing Club	41	41	36	-59	44	-46	36	198
48	Rob Bowen & Hanah Bowen	1358	Netley Sailing Club	40	-59	-56	34	45	43	40	202
49	John Postlethwaite	1405	Beaver Sailing Club	12	17	59	-59	59	-59	59	206
50	Ian Hope	1939	Draycote Water Sailing Club	-55	47	-50	33	49	41	41	211
51	Richard Whitelock & Brandon	1705	Grafham Water Sailing Club	43	40	43	41	-59	-53	47	214
52	Philip Warner	1756	Draycote Water Sailing Club	51	46	42	29	51	-55	-52	219
53	George Wood	1908	Grafham Water Sailing Club	50	32	46	-55	-59	48	50	226
54	Robin Gill	753	Beaver Sailing Club	-52	42	-54	52	52	45	44	235
55	Keith Chidwick	1840	Queen Mary Sailing Club	-53	44	-53	48	46	49	49	236
56	Simon Hare	1970	Oxford Sailing Club	47	48	-55	53	50	-54	51	249
57	Martin Searle	1331	Seasalter Sailing Club	-54	-59	51	54	48	52	48	253
58	Keith Bartlett	1962	Open Dinghy Club	59	59	-59	59	59	59	-59	295



"I was Golden Goldstone's Batman" - by Ed.

It's the morning after the Nationals have finished. Still in Pwllheli for the Fun Events, Mrs. Ed. and I are enjoying a leisurely breakfast when my phone rings. It's Gordon Goldstone, who's back home in London. He thinks he may have left his sailing bag in the changing room. Would I mind awfully picking it up and bringing it to the next event at Carsington. "No worries - let me check", I say. On entering the changing room, the atmosphere confirmed its existence. Further, closer visual and nasal inspection by Association trained laundry experts revealed the offending article had been rightly tracked down - see above. Mrs. Ed then issued a decree to the effect that she was not disposed to sharing the journey home with the contents of the bag in their current condition, never mind storing it at chez Love in the same state for the best part of a month. I had to agree with her sentiments. "You can sort it!" was her parting shot as she disappeared up Snowdon. So sort it I did. It was back to the Welsh penthouse. Sadly, on my return, it dawned on me that Mrs. Ed. had given the butler and housemaids the day off. There was nothing for it but to resort to personal treatment of Golden's Smalls - see below. Despite my short tenure, I have now resigned this dubious commission. One can have too much of a good thing. The words 'bang', 'head', 'wall', and 'stop' also have certain ring to them. Applications for my replacement are currently being sought! SQUEP responses only, please. (Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel)



2011 GO-KART GRAND PRIX *by Bob Carter*



Above: the four abreast cornering from Team Carsington

Left : this year's starting line-up

The Go-Kart Grand Prix

has become firmly established as a feature of the Sprint 15 Nationals and it is contested almost as seriously as the sailing. This year we got 12 drivers taking part at the Glasfryn Track a few miles out of Pwllheli on Tuesday 16 August. The Shanklin youth element, who have so often dominated this event in the past, were not here this year but Shanklin, true-to-form, sported the biggest team of 5 drivers (Stuart Pierce, Paul Grattage, Liam Thom, John Shenton and Tina Roman). Carsington (Ray Gall and George Love), Grafham (Mark and Jacob Aldridge) and Seasalter (Kevin Dutch and Martin Searle) all were represented by 2 drivers and Kevin Parvin was the sole representative of Penmaenmawr Sailing Club as the Roberts men folk seemed to have left early this year. With 2 ex-champions (Mark Aldridge and George Love) and many other fancied drivers taking part, it was all to race for.

The competitors got 1 practice session followed by 3 heats. In each heat the drivers started on a grid and raced hard from the off. The choice of kart and positions on the grid were left to chance and quite quickly it was established that kart No. 25 was a dog but kart Nos. 14, 5 and 1 were much liked. Both Paul Grattage and George Love had a turn in kart 25 and were not impressed but the fight for kart 14 was intense. On the track Kevin Dutch and Mark Aldridge both had turns in pole position and led heats from start to finish. Jacob Aldridge had the same hunched-over-the-wheel posture as his dad and proved a demon at stealing the inside position around the corners, but he was prone to looking sideways at his competitors whilst driving flat out round the corners – I think he was trying to psyche them out!

Both George Love and Ray Gall were fast and fiercely competitive and were usually dicing with Jacob somewhere near the front.

Martin Searle perfected the 'look no hands' posture for the camera as he passed by the spectators.

It was all good stuff to watch but it was hard to determine who had been the winners of each heat as this was determined by fastest lap times – not first place on the track. Tina Roman had worked this out and so she was banging in fast laps on clear bits of the track without all the bravado of the 4-abreast stuff round the corners of Team Carsington!

When the 6 fastest drivers for the final were notified, it turned out to be Kevin Dutch, both Aldridges, and 3 from team Shanklin – Liam Thom, Tina Roman and Stuart Pierce, the latter showing that his tractor driving skills are still there and could be put to good effect. The shock result of both George Love and Ray Gall failing to qualify shows that it is hard to get fast lap times when you are 4 abreast! After a bit of argy-bargy, which involved getting kart 25 relegated to the scrap heap, the final got underway with Kevin Dutch leading the charge. Mark Aldridge's kart packed up after less than a lap. A couple of laps later Kevin's kart also packed up leading us to believe that they were running out of gas. This left Jacob Aldridge hurtling in the lead aided by the fact that he had no Team Carsington to take his eye off the track. Both Mark and Kevin got replacement karts (as it was fastest lap time that mattered) and Tina was, once again, quietly burning rubber with fast laps on quiet bits of the track.

In the end the official came out with the results and it was Jacob Aldridge who took the winners laurels and the hotly contested accolade of Sprint 15 Association Go-Kart Champion from Kevin Dutch and Tina Roman.

2011 Go-Kart Champion, Jacob Aldridge flanked by second, Kevin Dutch and third, Tina Roman.

Pictured left is not a 'boot' from Kevin's go-kart. It's from his trailer which suffered a blowout on the M6 at 2.00a.m. whilst being towed to Wales by Nick Dewhirst. Nick was not amused. It does, however, go to prove just what a slick operator Kevin can be!



NATIONALS CRUISING *by Ray Gall*



Llanbedrog

&

“UNIQUE”



The plan was to sail to Abersoch situated on the Lleyn Peninsula in North Wales. However, with calm breeze conditions forecasted for the fun sail, our destination was rerouted to Llanbedrog, a slightly shorter passage than originally planned, not that this would deter St. Nick! - (Chairman).

Llanbedrog is a very picturesque and, as advertised, a semi paradise tucked away beyond the mighty mountains of Snowdonia. It is especially renowned for its sheltered sandy beach (the most sheltered in North Wales) and nestles under a steep rocky headland covered with picturesque heather and fringed by pine trees. The village gets its name because of the establishment of the Church, which is attributed to St Pedrog who lived in the 6th Century. Llan is an old Welsh word meaning an enclosure and so was used to denote the land on which churches were built.

Eight Sprint 15s set off, Erling Holmberg, Kevin Parvin, Jon & Robert Finch, Paul Grattage and St. Nick launched from the beach at the allotted time of 10:30, with Ray & Liz Gall and George & Pauline Love launching some thirty minutes later after some debate about whether it was possible to get forward propulsion given the calm conditions.

After clearing Pwllheli Bay we came across St John (Postlethwaite) and two disciples who had found an altogether more purposeful use for a slow moving Sprint 15 which was now in use as a fishing boat and a rather successful one at that. After just a short time trawling they had managed to catch five mackerel and one gurnard - impressive! Our hopes for a fleet BBQ later that day on the beach were dashed as St John soon headed back to shore to feed the five thousand back at his glamorous Pwllheli penthouse.

Sailing out into St. Georges Channel, looking for a freshening sea breeze, St. Nick came across a rather nice Moody 42 (Marie Celeste) under motor and on a converging course. He hailed “starboard” but received no response. Undeterred St. Nick pressed home his advantage and hailed several more times before a rather startled Captain Birds Eye figure appeared on deck. It transpired he had set his auto pilot before going down below to brew his morning cuppa, oblivious to all other vessels in the north Atlantic. St. Nick (never one to miss a sales promotion) continued to hail, “Have

you thought about purchasing a Sprint 15? Excellent and versatile catamaran in all breeze conditions.....each year we have two national events, five summer TT and five winter TTs, etc., etc.”. At this the surprised and now bewildered skipper turned about to see who this strange chap was standing on the windward hull of this little catamaran, barely under any detectable motion. St. Nick continued: “if you’re lost you are welcome to join us, we are a friendly bunch and are currently on a fun sail across Cardigan Bay to somewhere over there.....!” Unable to comprehend, the Moody 42 skipper turned away and sailed past George & Ray and enquired: “Is this guy for real.....?” Ray and George responded very much in the affirmative and informed him that, although St. Nick may appear a little odd, he was indeed truly unique. With this they bade him farewell.

After what seemed a marathon sail, Llanbedrog approached. It was indeed very picturesque and picture postcard in the brilliant sunshine with holiday makers on the beach wondering who these amphibians were coming ashore with their strange two white hull machines. We could see that Erling and the rest of the Sprint 15ers had beached their cats on the golden sands of Llanbedrog. What we could also see was St. Nick still making for Abersoch oblivious to all else including our intended destination. George and I soon joined Erling and the rest of the fleet all of whom were consuming vast quantities of ice cream. Erling (St Ebenezer) informed the gathered throng of the scandalous prices for food /sustenance in this area. He had, however, determined after extensive reconnoitering and research, that best value for money appeared to be a £1:60 Cornetto!

Sufficiently fed & watered, we all left the very pleasant area of Llanbedrog, making our way around the headland in search of our St. Nick. Miraculously he appeared from his pilgrimage of the coast of Abersoch beach and back, enquiring: “Where have you all been? I couldn’t see any boats so thought I would try this picturesque secluded bay packed with holiday makers”. Irreplaceable is our own St. Nick!

With the brethren reunited, we all sailed back to Pwllheli in the afternoon sun and freshening breeze to meet up later in the sailing club restaurant and reflect on our unique leisure sail to Llanbedrog.

OUR DAY OUT *by Pauline Love*



A DAY UP (and down) SNOWDON

I know the go-kart event is second only to the feverishly contested racing on the water, but it isn't everyone's first choice of 'other' things to do as participant or as spectator.

The previous evening I overheard Erling announce that instead of karting he was going to walk up Snowdon. Being a keen walker, my ears pricked up and shyly asked if he wouldn't mind if I came too. "You're going up Snowdon, WITH Erling, on your own? That's brave!" George(Ed) said, accompanied by an un-familiar smirk!! "Why?" I ventured to ask, without really wanting to know the answer. But no reply was forthcoming. Immediately alarm bells rang. Was it time to muster some support in this rash decision? "Err, Liz," - (I had collared Liz, wife of Ray (1914) and trusty friend) - "you'd like to walk up Snowdon tomorrow, WOULD'N'T YOU??" Her arm was well and truly twisted in a double arm lock. Her answer was an enthusiastic affirmative and I breathed a HUGE sigh of relief.

As the day dawned I sought out Erling and heard again, for about the 20th time (since agreeing to join him on this trek), "Last time I was in Pwllhelli I wanted to climb Snowdon, but didn't get chance! In 4 years time I may be too old!!" I was truly convinced by now the peak and nothing less than the very summit of that well known Welsh mountain would be conquered and was our destiny for that day.

The Gall-mobile was commandeered for transportation and the Boys (oh, yes, I forgot to mention Nick (Chairman) Dewhurst decided he was to be the 4th member of the expedition) leapt onto the back seats, announcing they were "having a day off from organising things!" So with new found responsibility, Liz and I expertly navigated our way to base camp (car park) at the top of the Llanberis Pass.

Arrival at Snowdon confirmed my worst fear that the Boys were not true mountain trekkers. They wore trainers not boots, jeans not waterproof trousers, thin shower-proof cagoules, (not exactly the Berghaus best) and had no essential rations such as water or food. The Boys seemed impressed with the Girls' sartorially practical mountain attire. In

true, Girl Guide style (motto: "Be Prepared") Liz and I were equipped with map and compass. Our rucksacks contained provisions of water, food, survival bag, first aid kit and flares! The Boys carried nothing!

So, we set off, onwards and upwards along the steep and rocky Pyg Track. Erling set off at startlingly fast rate. His recent fitness campaign of walking 12 miles a day was paying dividends. However, it wasn't long before he had to stop, completely out of breath whilst Nick, Liz and I plodded on at a steady pace. And so at last, in a manner reminiscent of that well known Aesop fable, The Hare and the Tortoise, the summit was conquered. The view from the top was non-existent, but the sense of achievement was paramount. Through dense mist, wind and rain we sought shelter and a well earned rest in the relatively new, impressive, and environmentally sensitive cafe. His diet abandoned, Erling devoured a calorie loaded, gooey cream bun. Nick, throughout the whole escapade had been un-characteristically quiet. "Are you OK Nick?" I ventured to ask. "Yes, I'm just having a day off from talking. I've done quite a lot of it over the last three days."

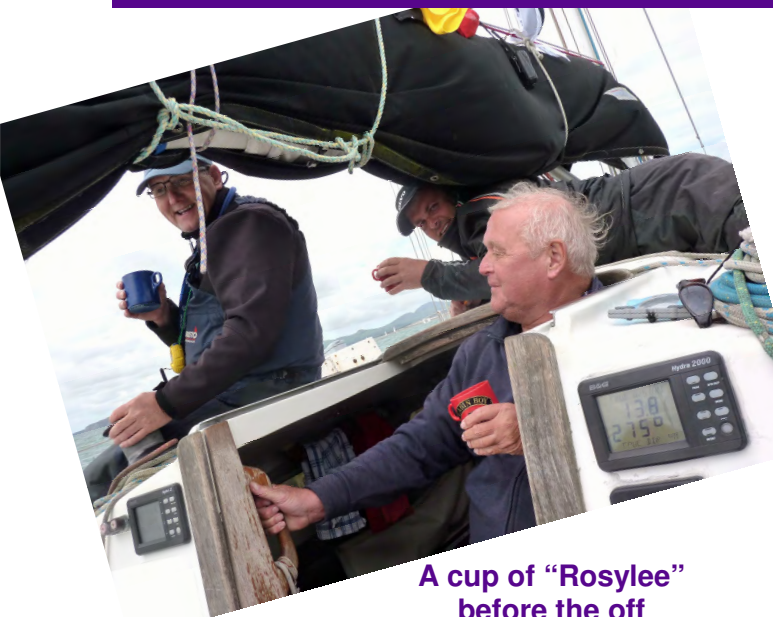
The descent via the Miners Trail followed a tranquil route around scenic lakes and waterfalls. The sun came out and lifted our spirits. After a total of six hours of walking and eight miles of terrain covered, we reached our destination with a tired but satisfied feeling of exhilaration and achievement. Liz and I gratefully relinquished our rucksacks, now somewhat lighter, as Erling and Nick had helped to deplete our rations.

Just as we were ready to depart, Nick rushed out of the car. "Oh, I just need to take one more photograph", was his explanation as he disappeared into the gloom on the other side of the car park.

This last sortie was one too many for a weary body and mind. In a semi-conscious state, on his return, Nick leapt into the back seat of the wrong car, much to the consternation of a mother and her daughter. Only loud peels of laughter from Erling, Liz and I, brought Nick back to the present and the right vehicle.



DON'T BLAME THE RACE OFFICER



A cup of "Rosylee" before the off



Laying the line



The Safety Girls : notice crew checking out texts and 'Faceyb' before the start

“so there I was, at 11.00 a.m. on Saturday morning attending my first ever race officer's briefing..... ”

Having managed to damage something in my knee doing what I shouldn't have been doing, (walking alone up in the mountains in Madeira), I had come to Pwllheli without FREDDIE, and kind of hoping I could find something useful to do. Erling was on the job and knew that they might be short handed on the committee boat. So there I was on the Saturday morning at 11.00am attending my first ever Race Officer's briefing. At this stage I must say just how friendly and welcoming everyone was to this old sod, who knew a bit about Cats, but bu—er all about about running races.

Race Officer Howard Jones and PSC Race Manager Gareth Roberts were in charge and it was evident immediately that these two guys knew what they were talking about. Both had just returned from a 10 day pre-Olympic event at Weymouth and both had been selected to be part of the RO team for 2012. One of the big bonuses of going to a venue like Pwllheli is that the rescue boats and general race organisation is carried out by folk who are all properly trained and who know what they are doing. So when Howard started asking about marks 1 & 2 and someone answered, I realised that all the key tasks had been divided up to dedicated teams in each rib. The type of course (trapezoidal), the lengths of the beat (1 mile) and the angles of the legs were all noted. We were using Bob's 36 ft yacht as the committee boat, and from just his first few words it was clear that Bob was also an old hand at this RO game. Then it was collecting packed lunches and off to find the marina berth. Motoring out of the marina took longer than I expected, but not as long as the ribs took. For security reasons they are all kept on a floating pontoon well away from the shore, so you need to bum a ride to get to them, and rides appeared to be in short supply when the crews were all ready to embark. So for all you guys who were hanging around on the water for the start of the practice race, this was one of the reasons for the delayed start. The other reason was that the Dan buoy at the end of the start line snapped its anchorage fixings as it was being lowered into position and Gareth was called upon to make a very hasty repair.

I won't repeat what has already been written about the races. Instead I'll try to concentrate on what I saw the RO's and their various rib based teams doing.

"Marks 1 & 2" set the windward mark based on a bearing and distance given by Howard. They then set mark 2 based on an agreed angle (which I think was around 80 degrees as previously discussed with Erling). "Marks 3&4" set the start line and only then were the two remaining marks laid. Throughout this period the RO was checking the wind direction and the angle of the start line. Apart from the problem with the Dan buoy, all went well, that is until we gave the first sound signals. It became very evident that we were seriously short of decibels-the batteries needed recharging. So for the first day's racing, you competitors had to rely on the flags and not the sound signals.

Talking about flags, this was a very well organised activity, with Bob giving clear instructions on which flag was next to be raised or lowered accompanied by a clear countdown. This left Howard, the RO to concentrate on monitoring the start line. During the final countdown the rib stationed at the end of the start line kept up a constant commentary on the proximity of boats close to the line at the pin end.

During the race the RO and "Marks 1&2" kept a constant eye on the wind direction, to see if the windward mark needed moving, once all competitors had completed a lap.

Recording the finishing positions was done in triplicate-two people independently writing down boat numbers, with a third (me) speaking into a digital recorder. As soon as the last boat crossed the line, the two handwritten lists were read back to check for errors. Gareth then immediately went below and entered them up on his laptop. I think the results were then transmitted to the Race Office back in the clubhouse.

by Keith Bartlett



The first few competitors to finish the first race including Erling, soon gave some verbal feedback on the course, particularly the angle of the reach up to mark 2. There were adjustments made to this prior to the start of race 2.

A potential disaster almost occurred during the count down sequence for race 2. The pesky Dan buoy shed its tethering line once again and the RO stopped the count down with about 2 ½ minutes to go by hoisting the 'N' flag to abandon the start sequence. 90% of the fleet didn't notice this and proceeded to start by their countdown watches. Eventually, when it was obvious that they were not going to turn around and come back, Howard called for the rescue boats to round up the fleet and return them to the start area.

So, all in all, it was an interesting first day, especially as we only just made it back into the marina minutes before the falling tide would have prevented our return.

We tried to learn from our mistakes from day 1. On day 2 we went out much earlier from the marina, ensured that the ribs were off their pontoon on time and instructed the beach master to hold the beach tallies until we were in position and the course already partly laid. We were also equipped with no less than 3 sound systems-you could play quite a tune on them!

Sprint 15's don't normally do general recalls at Nationals as we are generally line shy. But the start of Race 3 saw two general recalls followed by the hoisting of the black flag-a first time ever occurrence for Sprint 15's!

So, our best-laid plans of getting race 3 completed on time were in tatters. With the need to give enough time for the fleet to return to the beach for lunch, Race 4 was started quickly and a close watch kept on the timings taken by the leaders for each leg. With the wind both shifting and dropping all the time, Howard decided to finish Race 4 early at mark 2, a decision that was pretty much approved by all on the water.

The competitors were held on the beach until the course for Race 5 was almost set. Options had been kept open to run with the inverted P course for the afternoon but the 17-knot wind was well above the 12-knot max wind guideline which the RO had agreed with Erling. So it was a continuation of the trapezoidal course. As the wind was freshening, the beat was increased to 1.1 miles from the committee boat which probably gave something like a 1.3-mile beat in total from Mark 4. Again the times to complete the beat were being closely watched and, as the mid fleeters were taking approx 30 minutes per lap, Race 5 was shortened to two laps.

We got the black flag out again for Race 6 on day 3, but not before event leader Mark Aldridge had hailed the committee boat with a request to change to Frank Sandell's boat after a very unfortunate port/starboard incident up near the pin end. Howard gave his approval to this and remarked on the generosity of Frank in opting to sail in Mark's badly holed no 19. Once again the tide, which was supposed to be almost non-existent, had played a vital part in the proceedings. Race 6 was probably the closest finish in the whole event, with Kevin Dutch just getting the gun from Paul Grattage who had tried to go for speed by easing off a few degrees and aiming for the pin end of the line. All this was very closely watched from the committee boat.

We had the time to get the seventh and final race in but were wary of not holding the fleet out for too long. There was the prize giving to consider as well as the well fare of those competitors who would be loading up their boats and departing thereafter. Once again, with the wind dropping, the final race was shortened to two laps.

The tide was way too low to enable Bob to return to his berth in the marina so he sat out in the bay, bobbing about for a few hours, whilst we all returned in one of the ribs. And thus ended my first real experience of seeing a professional Race Officer and team at work. I thoroughly enjoyed it and I learnt a lot. I was also able to take some reasonable photos (but no where near as good as those taken on Day 1 by the editor's moll, Pauline).



The view down the line



And they're gone!



Race Officer's Gallantry Award? - You do see the funniest things from the Committee Boat!

“THE OTHER WAY IS UP” by Ian Hope



Team Draycote

From the top:
author Ian Hope in clear
air at the back of the
field - (cool shades!)
Ed Tuite Dalton -
in a wave
Phil Warner -
with time for a wave
Pete Slater -
on a wave
Jan Elfring -
in the zone

“Team Draycote”, consisting of Jan, Ed, Pete, Phil and myself arrived from the Midlands on the Friday evening. Jan appraised and ranked our adrenalin levels as conversation focused on what each wanted to achieve - “upper quartile would be good...”. Previous events were re-lived ...possibly embellished? Who knows, the beer was going down well. So began our first evening in Pwllheli. The boats had been offloaded and preparations in place for an exciting Open.

My aims were more pragmatic. Whilst I have raced a range of boats and dinghies, Sprint 1939 was my first catamaran and this Open my first truly competitive event in a cat. She was newly purchased from Grafham and proving quite a challenge when it came to tacking in a decent blow.

Saturday offered a great prospect for racing with winds force 5 gusting 6. As the rest of the fleet took the opportunity to orientate themselves before the 1st race I managed to capsize not once but twice! No half measures, I turned turtle on both occasions each time following abortive tacks. I was certainly getting the hang of righting the boat, if not tacking. However, my submersive activity it hadn't done the sails any good. The 3 lower battens had punctured through the sail and the 4th was working its way loose.

Almost by accident I discovered how to do a 3 point turn and I must admit that it is a funny sight watching Darts tack compared to monohulls, as they effectively stall during the process of changing direction.

Competition was keen throughout the fleet and my performance frustrating. However, one advantage of being one of the anchor men of the fleet was that there was plenty of clear wind! Two races were sufficient for one day and it was time for Brian Phipps to work some essential magic. Brian's mobile workshop and chandlery were to prove an essential element to keeping me on the water for the weekend. I remain appreciative to Brian's pragmatism (as battens were pop riveted in position) and indebted to his advice.

Each race effectively provided a clean sheet, with previous errors consigned to the results table. Whilst preferred beats drew out tactics a new dimension presented itself with the cat on a run/broad reach. Vigorous reaching straying well clear of the rhumb line didn't always pay off and also led to a cluster of boats converging on the downwind mark on differing tacks. Additional spice and indeed incentive came with the introduction of Pro-Am score card.

Whilst there was active competition on the water, it was heartening to openly receive advice in the boat park. I felt that the overriding concern was to get the best out of the boats and thus create a competitive event. Essential ingredients of fraternity and humour were in abundance.

The events and incidents following 7 races over 3 days were summarised at prize giving. Beware all! Those random remarks and errant activities both on and off the water attract not only prizes but derogatory comments to boot!

I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, came away absolutely knackered and look forward to next year's event. A note of thanks goes to the event organisers and race officials.

VIEW FROM THE UPPER MIDDLE *by David Groom*



Notes from the Middle of the Results – Thoughts on a first Dart 15 Nationals.

I have sailed various catamarans, notably a Dart 18, for far too many years but late last year I had the chance to buy into an old Dart 15 in need of some TLC. Having raised it from the dead, I treated it to a new set of sails in honour of a significant birthday (for me, not the boat). I then attended two days of the Sport Nationals at Instow. I had so much fun it confirmed my intentions to do the main nationals in Pwllheli later that year. As a bonus, my wife Celina likes Wales, so was happy to come along for what I could now call a joint holiday. We arrived in Pwllheli to typical Welsh summer weather and warm rain. The prevailing weather stopped, allowing us being able to rig up the boat in fair conditions and, more importantly as Celina was keen to remind me, to sort out tent at the Aberech Sands Campsite in the dry. We then made our first big mistake of the weekend in that we decided to walk into Pwllheli early evening and eat there. Rather to our surprise, as compared to Abersoch or Porthmadoc, Pwllheli is what you could describe as “visually challenged” to say the least. It appeared as if the recent civic unrest had spread from England. So it was back at the Club where the environment looked up. We shared a few drinks and a chat with other early arrivals and called it a night. The second big mistake of the weekend was that I suggested to Celina that I was going to the Club for 8 a.m. the following morning for breakfast. The deal on this was struck on condition that - “YOU KEEP QUIET WHEN LEAVING THE TENT, and come back later to collect me”. I did as told, enjoyed the first of three great full Welsh Breakfasts at the Club, finished rigging boat, wheeled it down to the beach and registered. I phoned Celina at 10:30 asking if she was ready for collection and, big mistake number three, discovered I had woken her up! I finished rigging, bought lots of bits off Brian Phipps as normal, found the route to the beach and tallied. It was a long sail to Committee boat and it did not escape my attention that it was windy and very wavy in the bay – cool! There was a long wait for practice race but we eventually got going and pounded hard upwind and surfed big time downwind. This is fun I thought, weight is good and gosh I've finished not far off the top ten. This led to my third big mistake as I was overconfident resulting to a poor finish in the first race and a realisation that I did not know how to sail upwind in big waves or actually sail una rigged. For the next race, I decided that the best course of action was to follow the boat ahead so I looked out for Kevin Dutch, Paul Grattage

and Stuart Snell and started with them so as to see how they did it as they powered off into the distance. Kevin worked very hard fully hiking, steering over every wave and constantly adjusting the traveller. Stuart used his decades of Dart experience to sit on the side, balance the boat and rig settings to perfection and go almost as fast. What were the lessons learnt? Hike hard, so as to continue to use excess ballast to advantage, keep the traveller out, sail free, tack on flat spots and blast through waves. Having finished, I reached back to the beach thinking - I will really hurt later - to be met by the welcome sight of Celina on the beach with the trolley. I went to find “Loose Cannon” (Steve Roberts) to discuss our attempted ‘boat mating’ between races. The incident was entirely my fault as I was hove to on port. Thankfully there was no lasting damage done and he accepted a beer as a peace offering. Top Tip for the day - bribe Kevin Dutch with post racing beer to receive useful Dart 15 sailing tips.

The second day was another early start and another decent Welsh Breakfast. I noticed newly slim-line, light weight Erling looking rather sorry for himself whilst eating his two bits of dry toast and watching the rest of us tuck into the full fat repast. I launched to less wind and waves and had to work hard as wind continued to drop. I also noticed other boats now overtaking me left, right and centre on the reaches and runs. I made a mental note to re-read Brian Phipps and Kim Furniss books regarding reaching tactics. I returned to the beach and there was much talk whilst de rigging about - shock horror - general recalls and the use of the Black Flag that “Never happens in this fleet.....” I thought - ‘you should try Dart 18 racing as it almost never doesn’t happen!

The Association dinner in the evening was really enjoyable and we were spared the Chairman’s after dinner speech in exchange for his slightly dodgy holiday snaps. I also looked at the photos taken by our “Official” Photographer (Mrs. Magazine Editor Love)” as compared to those from the “Professional” photographer also out there recording the event. I honestly think that hers were better and I will be sending George a memory stick asking for a set.

The last day was less wind but lovely sunshine. There was more advice from Stuart on light wind settings. I made my final big mistake on the last mark of the last race as I, allegedly of course, failed to give our Chairman water rather to his chagrin and even worse failed to do any turns. He still beat me overall by two points and we both overtook the boats which had sailed on before tacking for the finish by tacking early so I trust he feels poetic justice occurred in any event. The prize giving was truly excellent with wide range of serious and fun prizes and meaningful thanks given to all the helpers from both the fleet and from the Club. Other fleets could learn from this inclusive approach.

All in all it was a brilliant weekend in what I thought was a super venue that (George please note) I would very happily go to again. The racing was superb and the fleet comprises a great bunch of people who are a joy to sail with. Sportsmanship and camaraderie abounded all weekend, in particular the help given to George Stephen and the willingness of Frank Sandells to lend Mark Aldridge his boat after a collision holed Mark’s to allow the latter a chance to win the event overall. You are a super bunch and roll on next year’s Nationals by which time I might even have been forgiven by Nick.

Tremors in Lancashire due to Sprint Nationals - Reuters

I'm worried. No, really. I am very worried!

I think something disastrous could be about to happen and it could happen very soon. By nature I can be a bit wimpy at times, but this time it's different. I'm not just walking around with a frown on my face or perhaps looking over my shoulder every ten seconds when I walk through Birmingham City Centre. No. I just can't get it out of my head. I am even waking up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat, and it takes a lot to wake me up in the day, let alone in the middle of the night.

It's Albert R Broccoli's fault. He concocted a totally unbelievable film, with Roger Moore even more unbelievably playing an MI6 agent. Moore must surely have been drawing his pension and enjoying the freedom of his bus pass at the time. His likelihood of putting up any resistance to Grace Jones, as was apparent in one candid scene, was far less than my scoring a test match century against any Commonwealth country. But there you are. If John Barry wrote the theme tune then you can pretty much guarantee that absolutely everyone on the planet will watch the film at some time in his or her life. And so it has been with "A View to a Kill". Total rubbish! Worst Bond film I ever saw. It even contained a stupid scene where a man goes fishing in a small boat in the middle of a very, very large lake. Then something rather odd happens. The evil Zorin plots to flood Silicon Valley and monopolise the World's only remaining supply of microchips. Being the product of medical experimentation with steroids performed by a Nazi who took refuge in the Soviet Union after World War II, Zorin is gleeful in his machinations and places a big bomb in a mine under the lake which the fisherman is innocently enjoying. He uses a smaller bomb to drain the lake, flood the mine and hide the big bomb which is intended to explode, thereby unlocking the Hayward and San Andreas Faults which in turn will flood Silicon Valley (somehow). During the draining of the first lake, which seems to happen in about thirty seconds flat, the poor, innocent fisherman is left high and dry. And this is what has got me thinking. It could be about to happen here – **right now** – under our very noses.

This is not to say that the whole of Cambridgeshire is definitely going to become awash with killer prawns and tiger mussels from Grafham Water, or indeed that the maze of underground pipelines connecting Rutland Water to all other sources of Hydrogen Oxide in mainland Britain are going to suddenly rear up from the terra firma and squirt adjacent high tech businesses to death. No, that would be just plain silly. And I mean it (honest). No, what could possibly happen is much more haphazard and not the result of a dastardly plot at all. Just think – why in a country which has virtually stopped mining coal altogether in favour of placing large solar panels atop wealthy people's houses, why I ask you, is there a sudden upsurge in mining accidents? Why have the only two remaining pits been inexplicably flooded or suffered roof falls resulting in serious and sad loss of life? It can only mean one thing...

Earlier this year, news filtered through to Cuadrilla Resources, a gas prospecting company, that there had been a *significant increase in the distances* which owners of Britain's most successful single handed catamaran were prepared to travel in order to get some action in their 2010 Summer TT events. Leaked content from an earlier edition of Newsprint Magazine found its way to the ken of influential directors of this company. Said directors then made it *their* business to plan so that the country's energy supplies would be able to keep pace with this growing travel trend. Previously uninformed boffins considered what the future may hold and a decision was taken to divert imported oil stocks from electricity production in order to cater for mass movement of vehicles

and craft in 2011. Unfortunately this led to a somewhat hasty calculation involved in a process known as "fracturing". This is a method of hydraulically creating mini-earthquakes to release some of the two hundred trillion cubic feet of gas, estimated to exist in shales under one of our quieter northern counties. This was supposed to recover sufficient natural gas to make up the shortfall of fuel for electricity generation created by the increase in miles travelled by Sprint 15 owners. Panic spread in the upper echelons of Cuadrilla when extraction was halted due to earth tremors felt as far away as Beaver Reservoir. If the problem cannot be solved, some say that in 2012 Sprint 15 Cat sailors may all have to go by bus to Brightlingsea and take turns in sailing the only three boats that reduced fuel stocks will permit for the transport of craft to their National Event. That is unless, of course, engineers can extract gas from shale without reducing the north, and even other parts, of the country to a pile of rubble. Should they not get their sums right there is a danger that every reasonably sized body of water could disappear into the substrata as well.

I blame the spectators. *Take a look at the 2011 National Championships at Pwllheli.* There were so many families, friends and general hangers-on cum amateur photographers (one even crossed the Solent, dragging his long-suffering wife with him and posed as a trolley dolly) that there was hardly any accommodation left in the Llyn Peninsula during the week of the event. I also heard that another spectator cunningly sent in an entry fee as a competitor, and then feigned injury due to some fictitious misadventure on holiday in Maderia, or somewhere, just in order to get a front row seat on the committee boat. I know catamaran racing is very compelling to watch (take the recent YouTube broadcasts of the America's Cup events in Plymouth for example) but the lengths to which some will go not to miss out is, quite frankly, beyond belief.

Clearly something must be done, and I think I may have the answer. News is getting around about the steady increase in catamaran road travel due to the popularity of "Britain's most successful single-handed twin-hulled craft" events. Our only chance of avoiding being banned as an "Austerity Measure" is to fudge our figures. It shouldn't be too difficult, as members of Carsington Sailing Club proved in winning every local derby with Draycote that was recently undertaken in a spirit of friendly rivalry. A publicity campaign needs to be launched extolling the virtues of the inclusiveness of our sport. And the spectators are a very important part of our argument.

I've made a start. When the editor pointed out to me that we sailed quite a long way when we went to Pwllheli, I thought he'd gone off his rocker. But he pointed out that in every race it was about 1.1 to 1.3 miles to the first mark. Then in an athletic mental leap he concluded that we had each sailed about 70 miles... blimey, I'd never given it a thought. Next he said that since there was blah, blah, blah then the total miles sailed came to about, er(r), oh, 3,500 given an average of 50 racers. I'm not quite sure what kind of miles he was talking about, or exactly what a 'racer' is (the mind boggles) but there is definitely room for a bit of fudging here, and it could help our cause immensely. Three thousand five hundred miles sailed in three days is quite a lot and the actual total is probably considerably more. I have to point out; a) the ease of getting quite lost amongst the huge seas encountered on the complicated trapezoidal courses, and b) the not inconsiderable contribution made by those who sailed to various different parts of the world, and returned (thankfully) during the fun events.

So, lots of miles of some sort were sailed. Shall we say four thousand?

by Robert England



The other aspect of the campaign is a little trickier but with care it could be truly fudgetastic. "I wondered if a development of your last article "Burning Rubber" might be pertinent along the lines of how far we sailed at Pwllheli coupled with how far everyone travelled to get to and return from the event." pondered our trusty editor in one of those emails you know you can't ignore.

Well, George, "Yes"-but I don't want the class to get the blame for the first inland tsunami in the UK. At first sight my calculations show that the boats travelled, give or take, just over 29,000 road miles to and from the event. I managed to shave this a little bit by not allowing for distances involved in getting to and from homes to clubs and back a few times, setting up rigs to be towed and generally preparing for the event. I also rounded it down to the nearest thousand miles because the figures are getting embarrassing. Similarly, I shall emphasise that although there were officially 58 competitors, this undervalues the important contribution made to the event by the brave crews who risked life and limb in taking to the water too. So, 64 actual competitors then, if you'll excuse my interpretation of the word "actual". This begins to move us in the direction of the mega publicity methods used by the railways and the airlines when they talk about "passenger miles travelled" and I'm going say that "competitor miles" is more than "boat miles" and so George's figure of 3,500 miles should be increased to my figure of 3,862 miles in the racing (only). I, therefore, think

it's fair to say at least 4,500 people miles were sailed altogether after taking into account the Fun Events. Already, you can see, we are improving our case for the use of the country's scarce resources.

Finally, and to bring into play our trump card, the value of all of these figures is significantly enhanced by the presence of the spectators (even though many of them couldn't see the racing), the support teams and those who took part in managing and organising the event. I don't know how many there were but there must have been a lot, because I saw many of them. And don't forget Brian whose miles we won't take into account because if he hadn't come he would have gone somewhere else anyway. *He did figure hugely in the organisation and general benefit of the event, however, because he supplied the Pimms* (Thanks, Brian).

All in all I think I must have shown that despite the, sort of largish, amount of miles travelled in relation to this event the absolute maximum benefit has been derived from it, even though several people were sea sick. If it really is necessary to re-organise the use of national resources so that next year's event can take place I would like to suggest that Cuadrilla go prospecting in Wales where, to my knowledge, there are no Sprint 15's sailing on inland waters (apologies to Bala Catamaran Club) and any devastation caused by their expected miscalculations would affect only the sheep.

CLUB	helms	crews	people	miles	competitor miles
seasalter	2		2	622	1244
grafham	10	2	12	426	5112
shanklin	8	1	9	618	5562
carsington	4		4	316	1264
penmaenmawr	3		3	78	234
marconi	4		4	580	2320
thorpe bay	3		3	568	1704
draycote	5		5	334	1670
beaver	6		6	386	2316
stewartby	3		3	422	1266
whitstable	1		1	624	624
highcliffe	1		1	590	590
queen mary	3		3	498	1494
halifax	1	1	2	312	624
netley	2	2	4	554	2216
oxford	1		1	416	416
open	1		1	638	638
TOTALS	58	6	64		29294

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TOP TIPS FROM PHIPPS

Those who attended the **Sprint 15 Nationals** this year will know what I am talking about. When the wind was up and the waves started pumping, experience was stretched and even the best sailors were challenged.

So how can we do it better? What tools do we need? What should we be thinking about?

Fitness??

Sailing is a dynamic sport and the more wind, waves, pitching, mainsheet load, hiking, etc. demand a response in fitness. Many of us wish we were fitter. Others do something about it! I fall into the first and, for sure, I know that with better fitness I could put in a better performance.

Boat handling??

I know I bang on about it but it is one of the most important aspects of sailing especially in demanding conditions. Boat handling, boat handling and boat handling. That's what delivers confidence. Confidence to drive the boat, tack the boat, make adjustments, plan ahead, take the opportunity.

Pre-launch set up??

No doubt about it, a sailor that is over powered for the conditions will struggle to control their boat and deliver boat speed. A list of things to consider before you launch:

All the boat's equipment works, minimum friction in mainsheet system and traveller car, jamming cleats do the job, toe-straps correct length, downhaul can be maxed out, batten tension allows the mainsail to blade off, mast rake (forestay adjustment) is correct to allow the leach to stand and flatten the mainsail when almost block to block, rudder blades are locked forward in the stock and tracking inline.

Techniques on the water

This is the bit we sailors choose to believe will give us all the answers!! But to be honest, get the bits above right and you are well on your way. Sailors come in all shapes and sizes. They also sail in different styles so what works for one may not work for another. If it works for you keep doing it. Below are some basic principles which I work on when sailing into waves as a 78kg sailor, moderately fit, sailing a boat that is well set up and everything is working.

Where do I sit?

For best speed I find sitting too far forward, and that is on the 6" hatch cover, drives the bow into the wave making it pitch out of the water. The power in the rig is then used up in this pitching motion and I look to find a way to reduce that pitching by moving my weight aft without creating transom drag. With the bow up a little the boat becomes easier to steer, the skegs and rudder blades dig in to deliver drive, the centre of effort in the sail drives through the skeg area. A little help by rolling your upper body weight fore and aft as you work through the waves helps to lift the bow but fitness comes into that and is combined with hiking.

Mainsail set.

Whatever gives the boat best drive in the conditions is critical and that means almost constant adjustment as your boat slows and accelerates over and down the back of waves. For us sailors whom are less fit we may be forced to find a happy medium that prevents our mainsail from stalling as the mast pitches forward and backwards. This normally means sailing with a little more twist so less traveller down, but it is a trade off. The fit sailors will be looking to ease the mainsail as the boat is slowed by a wave and then sheet in and re-adjust as the hull drives through or slides down the other side. The amount will vary depending on the size of the wave but between 150-300mm is common (6-12 inches in old money). Leaving the traveller centred can deliver a big leach twist in the mainsail and likely to deliver poor upwind performance, loads of power, hull flying and lots of pitching. Where your traveller is best positioned on the day will have to be through experimentation.

Pwllheli's Big Swell Experts

(who finished just outside the top five)



- Keith Newnham
- Paul Roberts
- Erling Holmberg
- David Ball
- Richard Philpott
- Martin Ellis



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Platform angle

Two hulls in the water is likely to deliver double wave action against the front and rear beam. As in most conditions the windward hull just thinking of leaving the water is probably best but I can be persuaded sometime to sail with the hull a few inches higher if the boat feels better through the water. Flat on the water is not recommended and a hull flying may keep you dry but it cannot be fast, and is normally associated with pointing high but going slow.

Steering

Probably the biggest challenge and something that can only be successful when combined with all the points above. The boat can only go so fast in the conditions, so bearing away and driving the boat faster than the waves will allow you to go, cannot work. Luffing up and pounding into waves with no power will not get you there either. This is the option we often resort to when running out steam due to fitness. The workable medium has to be a combination of both with more time spent in between the two extremes. Waves come in sets with big waves somewhere in those sets. Our job is to look and plan ahead and make a decision how best to drive through the waves in front. That often means the decision about the wave you are currently driving through has already been made and you are already dealing with it automatically. The next wave on, you have a plan to deal with and the next wave on from that is coming into view so you are considering your options. Typically a big wave you cannot drive through will involve a bit of luffing to encourage the wave down the leeward side driving the hull to windward, easing the mainsail as the boat slows ready to ease the boat off the wind as you drop over the top. Smaller waves give the opportunity to drive the boat off, sheet in, hike and gain boat speed in preparation for the next big set.

What else.

Port and starboard tack are likely to deliver a different angle to the wave set so how you sail on one tack can be very different from the other, find that out pre-start by sailing part of the first leg, try different setups and have a good understanding and feel before you go into the start line.

Tacking in waves and strong winds is always a challenge and something to practice. Couple of things to work on:

a) be selective, choose a wave or set of waves that work in your favour. If you have to tack in a set of big waves start your tack as you drive up the face of the wave.

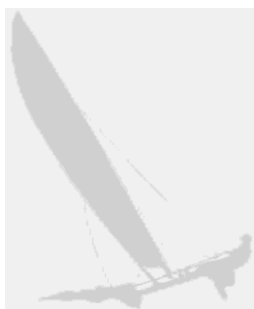
b) When sailing with traveller down (off centre), as you tack, sheet in to prevent the mainsail from flogging while also pulling the traveller towards the centre. Immediately the boat is head to wind dump the mainsheet and allow the boat to swing well off the wind before sheeting back in. With practise the amount of mainsheet eased can be limited.

OK, that is it. As always constructive time on the water is everything. We have a great variation of wave conditions down here at the Windsport Coaching Centre in Falmouth from rolling swell out in the bay to wind over tide short chop in the harbour and flat water in the roads. If you want some practice, come on down! When we next get some video time, the Windsport coaching team will get some footage and add it to our library of Sprint 15 sailing techniques.

Happy Sprint15 Sailing

Brian Phipps

Performance Catamaran Coach : Windsport



Sprint 15 Events Programme

Events Secretary: Erling Holmberg 01983 865012



Winter TT 2011/12 Events

Watch www.sprint15.com/events for details of events and updates.

Date	Venue	Contact	Phone
Sat 5 Nov	Stewartby Water Sports Club, near Bedford (A421)	Mark Norman	07867506685
Sat 3 Dec	Carsington Water Sailing Club, near Ashbourne	Ray Gall	01332 671016
Sat 7 Jan	Draycote Water Sailing Club, near Rugby	Peter Slater	01926 512129
Sat 18 Feb	Queen Mary Sailing Club, near Staines	Gordon Goldstone	01784 248634
Sun 25 Mar	Grafham Water Sailing Club, near St Neots	Bob Carter	01438 354367

Winter Traveller Series is for all sailing formats.

Five one-day events with three to count (or 2/3 or 2/2).

First race at 11am unless otherwise stated

Summer 2012 Events

Date	Event	Venue	Contact	Phone
21-22 April	Traveller	Seasalter, N Kent	Steve Willis	07980 416422
12-14 May	Sport Nationals	Sport Nationals, NDYC Instow, North Devon (Sat., Sun., Mon.)	Club Website	
June	Traveller	TBD		
30 June- 1 July	Traveller	Marconi Sailing Club, Essex	Fenella Miller	01376 329974
18-20 Aug	Nationals	National Championships-Brightlingsea. - Note: Sat., Sun., Mon. (2,3,2 races/day respectively)	Erling Holmberg	01983 865012
22-23 Sept	Traveller	Northern Championships, Carsington Water Sailing Club, Derbyshire	Club Website	
20-21 Oct	Traveller	Grafham Cat Open / Inland Championships, Cambridgeshire	Bob Carter	01438 354367

National Championships at Brightlingsea is for PY916 format

Sport Nationals at Instow is for PY883 format

Summer Traveller Series is for all sailing formats (Standard PY916 and Sport PY883).

Five events with three to count. First race Saturday at 12 Noon unless otherwise stated.



The U.K.'s Most Successful Single-handed Catamaran!
(so say the 2011 National Championships competitors)