

Shotwick Lake Sailing



Newsletter – July 2008

Editorial

Welcome to our "First Anniversary" Newsletter.

Yes its 12 months since my first attempt, it seems a lot less to me and hopefully doesn't seem a lot more to anyone else.

Once again the racing is proving very popular with a number of boats swapping places at the front of the fleet. We have even had an entry for one of our lesser known trophies – The Fast Lap Trophy – more of this later.

We also have a strong Albacore bias in this issue: -

The "Class Spotlight" is on the Albacore. Albacores feature heavily in the results and the embarrassing photo is an Albacore sailor.

The "Club Member in the Spotlight" is Stuart Hopson, this time it's a little different as instead of being written by the victim themselves it's been written by his Dad..

In addition we have a number of other items by our very own "Junior Hack" – Alex Jardine (keep them coming Alex you're putting everyone else to shame).

We also have another in the embarrassing photo series – who is it this time?

Last but not least we have a couple of photos from Colin Cummings following up on his earlier article concerning boat design.

CK

Class Spotlight - The Albacore

At 15 feet in length and 240 pounds hull weight, the Albacore is a great first boat for those who are just learning to sail and a very competitive racer for more advanced sailors. The Albacore is a fast and lively while being relatively easy to learn to sail and race. Swept spreaders supporting a tapered mast with a powerful vang and adjustable sail controls allow a crew to depower in high winds - enabling both light and heavy crews to race head to head. A very versatile boat, it is often sailed by husband/wife and parent child combinations. Some of the all women teams are the most competitive in the class. Those looking for a simple to learn, yet high performance sailing dinghy can join the ranks of Albacore sailors who come from all walks of life and range in age from teenagers to masters pushing 80 years of experience.

The Albacore is a boat that is both simple to get into at first, and one which will challenge your tuning and tactical skills for the rest of your life.

When you think how many classes of dinghy there are available its perhaps a little surprising that a design now approaching 50 years old is still holding its own among Britain's active fleets. There are a number of good reasons for its continuing popularity



Darryl and Dennis in 6433 – Courtesy of Colin Keogh

DESIGNED TO LAST

First of all the class is a "restricted", which means that the hull shape and sail plan are not allowed change from year to year. This has two benefits, ensuring that this year's boat is not obsolete next season, and at the same time allowing lots of freedom for owners to plan and fit control systems to suit themselves.

The class has moved with the times in other ways, adopting most of the new materials for hull, rig and sail construction, but only once proven and at a sensible cost. This is to avoid the extremes of cheque-book sailing and thus maintaining the value and competitiveness of existing boats.



Darryl and Dennis in the new speed machine 7429 – Courtesy of Colin Keogh

OLD BOATS COMPETITIVE

In fact, in almost all Albacore fleets there are examples of 20 year old boats, lovingly maintained, costing only a few hundreds of pounds second hand and winning races every weekend, much to the irritation of the higher sail numbers! Michael McNamara's world champion boat was around 20 years old.

VERSATILE

Another reason for its' continuing popularity is the fact that an Albacore is very versatile without compromising its performance. So while it's quicker than a Laser, it's not so cumbersome as a Wayfarer and weighs a lot less than a GP14 (even though it's a foot longer and much roomier). This good balance between power, weight and size makes it attractive to sail for two adults, but it's equally handleable crewed by an adult and child, or husband and wife (or wife and husband even!) whether racing, cruising or just pottering about. Of course, part of the beauty of the relaxed approach to rigging is that the helm can have all the controls fed back to him, or rig the boat so that absolutely all he has to do is to steer and remember to duck!

ACTIVE CLASS

At the last count there were around 90 clubs around the country with fleets of between 3 and 30 boats with many more places where Albacores are welcomed and sail in handicap fleets. An active class association puts a lot of effort into ensuring the continued success of this fine boat, providing a useful and interesting magazine, organising national championships every year with worlds every two years shared on a six year cycle between UK - USA - Canada. The fixture list for the year 2003 will have plenty of opens plus the Nationals (venue to be arranged). The 2003 Worlds will be in Kingston, Ontario- venue for many international sailing competitions.

ALIVE

Alive is the magazine of the National Albacore association. It is sent to all our members three times a year.

Alive contains

Reports from recent events

Diary of future open meetings and social events

Stories from members round the world

Useful technical and sailing tips from top sailors

UNIQUE INFORMATION PACK

The information pack which is sent out to new members is designed to give you more information about Albacores, where and how to sail them, how to rig and tune them and much, much more.

<http://www.albacore.org.uk>

Scorpion Junior Open Notts County Sailing Club - Saturday 28th June

On Saturday 28th June me, Richard and Carl Jones went to Notts County Sailing Club. So after 2 1/2 hour drive we reached the sailing club. There were 10 boats there and after a 'boring' briefing we got out on the lake me helming and Rich crewing. It was all going well until I clipped a boat on the start line which put us 3rd from last coming round the first mark. The brave and better sailors got the kite but we decided against it as there was a good chance we would get blown over (it was about 16kts). But on the second beat I decided to swap with Richard as when we tacked the tiller extension was getting caught on him, and I didn't want to experience my first capsizes in a Scorp and I didn't want to lose any more places.



Richard and Alex lead the fleet at the windward mark – Courtesy of Shellie Jones

With Richard helming I was now starting to enjoy it, and was not fighting for my life any more. So in that race we came 3rd. Then after lunch we sailed better and both of us were hiking out hard (unlike in the Grad when I'm the only one hiking out), and Rich was very pleased because we beat the Rose Brothers by about 30 seconds.

Then in the third race disaster struck, we were beating (going upwind) and then a big gust came and then the shroud shuddered and went slack. Rich pointed out one of the bolts fixing the shroud to the boat had come off so we had to retire. After some quick repairs by Carl we got out in time for the 4th race. Unfortunately our start wasn't so good this time, but we were still 5th round the windward mark. So we spent the race catching Penny Jeffcoate up (some of you Scorp sailors will know her) and both me and Rich had a laugh at her when she capsized at the gybe mark. So we finished 4th just behind the Roses again.



Close racing at the Scorpion Youth Championships – Courtesy of Shellie Jones

So we finished 4th overall which was a pleasing result just in front of Penny and behind the Rose Brother's. I had a great day sailing and I would like to thank Richard for letting me sail in his amazingly fast Scorp and Carl for driving me there and back all the way to Nottingham, for helping fix the boat and for putting up with being a spectator. Also I would like to thank all the Jones's (and Kimmy) for letting me stay at their house and putting up with me!
Alex Jardine

Fast Lap Trophy

Yes I know it features a Scorpion but as it's the only entry what can I do?

Many members may not be aware of the Fastest Lap Trophy. This used to be awarded to the person who (surprise, surprise) sailed the fastest lap.

It hasn't been awarded for a few years but those who were down at the lake on the 22nd June will remember a very brave Richard having a go at it. This was on a day when racing was cancelled and a number of boats (and people) sustained damage – who can forget Darryl's eye.

It was also the day when I witnessed the best pitchpole I have ever seen (or probably will ever see), well done Jonathan and Darryl and of course the "Albasub". It was a pity no one had a camera.

Rules

The rules are simple – sail around the 4 corner buoys in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction starting and finishing at the same buoy, which direction and which buoy is down to you. Get an independent witness to time you and then calculate your corrected time based on the handicap figures for your boat.

Now that Richard has taken the first step lets try and keep it going

POSITION	DATE	BOAT	HELM	CREW	TIME	HANDICAP	CORRECTED TIME
1	22.06.08	Scorpion	Richard Jones		8m-55s	1056	8m-27s

Embarrassing Photo Time

Following on from Tony "Paul Rutherford" Forster we now have a photo of a young looking Dennis Morgan which is pretty apt for this issue as Dennis is one of our Albacore sailors (editor grits teeth)



Courtesy of Sharon Bouckley

Not sure who Dennis looks like so I'm open to suggestions – send your idea's to newsletter@shotwicksailing.org

On second thoughts there is a passing resemblance to the well known actor Tommy Lee Jones.



*Who's the girl Dennis?
ck*

Shotwick Scorpion Training and Open Meeting

Five Scorpions turned out on Saturday 10th May for a very informative training session.

Faced with no wind Jerry Hannabus knew it was going to be a difficult day for him and the morning session started off with an in depth look at Angel Dust (SC 1947). This turned out to be a very informative session with Jerry being cornered into giving away some very useful tips which may have been described as "secrets". Angel Dust certainly is a very interesting machine.

Lunchtime saw a veritable feast provided by Shellie in the form of sandwiches and Colin provided a very nice large bowl of Tuna Pasta.

The afternoon saw a small amount of wind put in an appearance and Jerry sent everyone on the water to practice starts and roll tacks and eventually when the wind picked up some more (after 4:00pm) some spinnaker handling.

That evening everyone gathered at a local hostelry for a rather splendid meal and a few beers.

The next day started out as if it was going to be a repeat of the day before. After a short postponement the RO sent everyone out at the first sign of a steady breeze which disappeared when the boats started. In the difficult conditions that followed everyone struggled to do well and even at the end of the race there was a lot of late overtaking and some who had sailed into holes watched everyone sail by. Terry Flannagan and James Barr (SC1934) had prevailed best followed by Richard Jones and Jerry Hannabus (SC1947) and Steve Jardine and son Alex (SC1971).

The second race saw a little more sensible breeze. John Harrison and R. Sault (SC1979) came to the fore after a close battle with Terry and Rich.

The start of the third race had two boats (John and Jerry) caught OCS but John excelled to pull himself back into the front followed by Terry and in third place Carl and Shellie Jones (SC1974).

Final results were :-

1st Scorp 1979 John Harrison and R. Sault
2nd Scorp 1934 Terry Flannagan and James Barr
3rd Scorp 1947 Richard Jones and Jerry Hannabus
4th Scorp 1974 Carl Jones and Shellie Jones
5th Scorp 1986 Nick Russel and Sue Russel
6th Scorp 1971 Steve Jardine and Alex Jardine
7th Scorp 1990 Pete Crowther and Dace Thompson
8th Scorp 1681 Chris Walker and Paul Newman
9th Scorp 1977 Colin Keogh and Dave Bell
10th Scorp 1834 Tom Hall and Gavin Poullion
11th Scorp 1966 Paul Barnes and John Wells
RJ

Bala Easter Regatta

A number of boats from Shotwick attended the Whit Regatta at Bala Sailing club over the weekend of the 24th – 26th May. Although these were mostly Scorpions Stuart Hopson was also there sailing his Cherub with the sometimes Scorpion and sometimes anything else sailor – that well known “sailing Hussy” – Paul Newman.

I've resisted the temptation to include yet another Scorpion article so come on lads tell us about the “Cherubing” at Bala – or even the curry evening back at Stu's afterwards.
CK

A Journey in Design of Performance Dinghies for Home-building (part 2)

Following on from his article in the last Newsletter Colin has been kind enough to send me a few more photo's of his Pathfinder 2 design, these are reproduced below.



Courtesy of Colin Cummings



Courtesy of Colin Cummings

Graduate Open Toddbrook Sailing Club - Sunday 13th July

After weeks of preparation and working till about 11:00 pm the night before, we set off tired and rusty to Toddbrook sailing club in Derbyshire. After getting lost and having to do a U-turn in the middle of a town we finally got there.

We were a bit late but were helped out by the locals and made it for the briefing outside by a tiny little hut. Eight boats had turned up which was ok for the Grad class (as it is a dieing class). We got on the water early as we hadn't sailed for a long time together and we were consequently quite rusty.

Despite this we rounded the windward mark second and then later overtook the boat in front and finished about 1 minute in front of them. After lunch the wind dropped slightly (from about 9kts to 6kts), not good, as this meant roll tacks and both me and Dad (the old man) getting annoyed with each other and his new centre mainsheet lassoed me a few times. But again we managed to come first. The third race we had a battle on our hands as the wind kept shifting so you could be beating up to a mark not pointing anywhere near it and the boat behind you would be broad reaching up to it with ease. Never the less we just piped him at the post which meant we had three straight firsts.

I had had another good sail and it was great to win as Dad said he had another won a Graduate open event before. Now we're going to go to the nationals at Chichester racing the likes of Steve Cockerill (for those who haven't heard of him he's a world class sailor) but we're going to have to put up with camping in a cow field with one Porta loo.

Alex Jardine

Club member in the spotlight – Stuart Hopson

The die was cast on his first birthday when his grandmother (on his dad's side) gave him a buoyancy aid. From about 3 years old he pestered his dad (Steve) to be allowed to sail in his Flying Fifteen on Bala Lake; this was pretty scary (for Steve) especially when tacking, as Stuart would hold on to the mainsheet track, so that he could see over the side. At age 5 Stu had his first Oppy named Zouthopper, a beautifully finished wooden craft from Holland.

Members that have either been coached by Stu or have watched him in action, will know that he is fanatical about keeping the boat flat; this may be a consequence of the fact that his Zouthopper was fitted with a large brass inclinometer and he was told "sit on the side and keep the pointer in the middle – that way you won't capsize!"



Stuart preparing for the Scorpion Open at Elton in 1908 – Boat graphics by Richard Jones

Within a couple of years, sailing had become Stuart's passion and if he wasn't sailing, he would either be talking about sailing, reading about sailing or fiddling with his boat (no one was allowed to touch Stuart's boat or rig it without permission!)



Stuart sailing the Merlin at Shotwick with Steve earlier this year. – Courtesy of Colin Keogh

Many will know that Stu now likes strong winds and extreme boats (away from the club he sails a Cherub, Atum Bomb). This is not a new trend. In October 1994, aged 7, he competed in the end of season event on the lake at West Lancs. Despite the F6/7 winds (it was really difficult to walk along the shore) he insisted on racing despite his grandad's protestations. He seemed to be doing okay and was going rather quickly downwind, when a Fireball sailed past leaving a deep trough in the water which Stuart sailed into causing him to pitch pole end over end – not a common occurrence in an Oppy!



Stuart rigging Scorpion 1971. – Courtesy of Colin Keogh

By the age of 8 Stu was sailing at least twice a week and was competing regularly on the RYA North West junior circuit which he went on to win 3 times before being offered a place on the Welsh National Junior squad at age 11. Issy Hutchinson, an ex-Olympic windsurfer, who had incredible wind awareness and strong teaching skills, coached the Welsh Junior Squad at that time.

The lessons learned are still evident – ask Stuart how he knows the wind is about to shift, he may well tell you that “you can feel the temperature difference between your ears” or “don’t wear a hat, you will miss the wind-shifts”.

Having started squad training Stu upgraded to an ex-squad Optimist and started competing in the CORC (Club Optimist Racing Circuit) and later in the CYRC (Club Youth Racing Circuit), then soon after in international events before moving up to Lasers and competing in the national qualifier series. At 16 he qualified as an RYA Dinghy Instructor.

Stuart is social secretary for the Cherub Class Association and has been consistently placed at the top of the fleet at the National Championships. Those that follow the Yachts & Yachting news will know that last year he was involved in the Cherub Daemon project and was asked to fly out to Hyeres (expenses paid) to demonstrate the boat to the women’s Olympic Teams at the ISAF selection trials. He is currently working for Hartley Laminates, manufacturing and demonstrating a number of well known classes including the Wayfarer, Kestral, Optimist and Osprey.

SH

(Sorry about the Scorpion photo’s but Steve forgot to mention them in his write-up, send me some Cherub ones for the next issue Stu.)

The Last Word

As always I hope you have all enjoyed this latest edition of the Newsletter.

Once again I would like to thank everybody who has contributed either in words or pictures (or both) with a special thanks to the people at the UK Albacore Association for allowing me to reproduce their material.

For those of you who haven't contributed yet – why not? You're probably all sick and tired of hearing "Scorpions did this and Scorpions did that" and I don't want anyone to think I'm biased – even if I am. I can only print what I'm given and what I know myself, which by definition is bound to be about Scorpions, it's the same with the pictures.

If it wasn't for my loyal band of regular contributors then the Newsletter would be very thin indeed, I won't name them as they are credited else where but very soon I will run out of articles and the Newsletter will be no more or at the very least much thinner.

Every Newsletter to date has had a caption competition in it and to date we have had the grand total of No, Zero, 0 etc. etc. suggestions so what's the point in putting them in.

This isn't meant as a lecture, more a plea for help – I'm running out of ideas fast.

So come on tell us all about yourself and your sailing adventures, good or bad, scary or funny.

What about all you Solo sailors – what was Bala like?

Tom Piggot – congratulations but what did you spend all that money on – you're too young to drink.

Paul "The Hussy" Newman – what's it like to sail a Scorpion (no forget that one), a Cherub (or 2), a Laser 4000, a Fireball or even a Topper – I have the photo's somewhere.

Club Member in the Spotlight – come on Tony, Jack, Dennis, Ted, Geoff, Sharon, Dot, Glad, Wyn etc.etc. – tell us all about it.

RANT OVER

*Please send any articles to newsletter@shotwicksailing.org
Colin*