

Shotwick Lake Sailing



Newsletter – January 2008

Editorial

I trust that by now you've all recovered from the festive celebrations and are looking forward to playing with all those new bits of rope you got from your loved ones as well as putting on those brand new wet suits, life jackets and thermal hats – yes the 2008 season will soon be on us.

Hopefully you will have had time to read the Christmas Special and are now looking forward to the next thrilling instalment of our club newsletter.

Due to the “closed season” you may expect actual sailing items to be thin on the ground in this issue but we have had a number of items sent in by one of our younger members – Alex Jardine.

The “Class Spotlight” is at long last about the best looking, easiest to sail, most exciting, best value for money, friendliest etc. etc class at the club – yes “The Scorpion” – (I have to say that of course).

We also have an interesting article by Tim about dinghy cruising as well as a report on the recently held Level 1&2 Power Boat Course.

The “Club Member in the Spotlight” is Ron King.

Finally we have the answers to the anagrams in the last issue and another fun item.

Colin

TRAINING

The calendar for 2008 is now on the web site

<http://www.shotwicksailing.org/trainingcalendar.htm>

This includes a wide range of courses some aimed at beginners and other on improving your skills.

If you have any queries or you have ideas to add to the future training programme email training@shotwicksailing.org

We have also recently had confirmation of some grant funding to purchase six optimist dinghies and windsurfing equipment. This is designed to encourage more junior sailors and add windsurfing to the RYA recognised courses we offer. It is hoped the new equipment will be with us by March.

Tim Bowden

Shotwick Nature Watch

Following on from the last Nature Watch article there has been an unprecedented increase in sightings of the **Geoffus Weiruss** including one during late November where it was spotted taking refuge indoors at a well known entertainment venue in Connahs Quay.

In this issue we have another photograph taken at the lake for those who have forgotten what the lake can look like in good weather. The photograph below was taken by Sylvia Briercliffe in the summer of 2006 and shows a Common Spotted Orchid.



Club Member in the Spotlight

Membership Secretary Profile – Ron King

I joined The Club in 1985 about the same time I started sailing. Bought a Mirror and shortly afterwards bumped into Alan Hughes at a chandlers who invited me to the Lake – British Steel as it was then.

Like many others, I completed the Levels 1,2 and 3 dinghy courses soon after joining so I have no hesitation in recommending these to all comers. Started racing as a crew initially and then sold the Mirror to buy a Graduate. At this point Neil Holmes appeared on the scene and together we had a brilliant five years in competition at the Lake and opens. When Neil left for career and family (I'm still working on his return), the Grad lost its appeal and I pursued a more leisurely pastime, windsurfing.

The lure of competition, in sometimes less than deadly earnest, brought me back to racing and the prospect of duelling with my old sparing partners was irresistible. So I bought a Solo. To date, I estimate that I have taken part in more than a thousand races. I can't say that every one was an unmissable experience but the vast majority were.

If there is one lasting impression of my time at The Club, it is of the effort and dedication of people who have invested time and resource in all sorts of ways to make it work. Of course some people do more than others and it would be unfair to mention names but I honestly believe that nearly all of our members contribute and sometimes in ways that are not publicised. Without this effort, I would have missed out on hours and hours of fun so thanks to one and all.

Ron King

Class Spotlight -The Scorpion

The Scorpion is: -

A Modern Boat

Since its design and first launch in 1960, the Scorpion has adopted developments over the years to become the present modern competitive sailing dinghy.

The hull, constructed in wood or foam-sandwich, is built to strict measurements with small tolerances. Cockpit layout and rig controls are left to personal choice and class rules permit a choice of mast and sail suppliers.



1977 Showing many of the latest control systems (but not all!!)

A Durable Boat

A look at recent National's results proves how older Scorpions can remain competitive. Some recent National Championship-winning hulls have been over 10 years old, keeping new boats off the top spot.

Improvements in adhesive and paint technology mean that the newer hulls are retaining their strength, stiffness and light weight, keeping them competitive for longer.



Chris Walker & Paul Newman sailing 1681 – a 30 year old boat.

A Performance Boat

The Scorpion is a responsive boat with a light hull that gives excellent acceleration.

Upwind it points well and tacks easily, and off wind the spinnaker ensures a stunning performance.

Whether you are sailing inland or on the sea the Scorpion will give the performance you need.



Richard & Tom sailing 1971 at the 2007 Bridlington Nationals

A Class Boat

The class association actively promotes Scorpion sailing throughout the country.

Regular national and regional training events are held, as well as a full Open Meeting programme and an annual week-long National Championships at a sea venue.

Top sailors, many of whom are RYA trained Class Coaches, are always willing to assist those further down the fleet, raising the standard throughout.



*National Champion Jerry Hannabuss shows Carl how to do it properly at one of our Training Sessions.
(Vid cap from one of the Training Videos)*

A Family Boat

The raking rig, now fitted on most Scorpions, enables the Scorpion to be sailed competitively by a wide range of crew weights in all conditions.

This, along with junior prizes at Scorpion events and a dedicated youth regatta, means that now there are many younger sailors seen in Scorpions.

Parent and child combinations are not uncommon and it's not always the parent at the helm! Junior pairings often show their seniors a thing or two.



Adrian & Tom sailing 1834 at Shotwick Lake

A Fun Boat

The fun of sailing a Scorpion does not end when you come off the water.

Weekend open meetings usually have an associated social event and each evening of the National Championships has an organised social activity.

This in no way detracts from the competition on the water and the class can certainly be described as 'competitive, but friendly'.



*The "Angel Twins"
former Class Chairman – Steve Walker and Ex National Champion – Jerry Hannabuss
at the Miss Bridlington Finals 2007*

A Versatile Boat

The Scorpion is not a boat just for the accomplished sailor. The hard chine planing hull that gives performance upwind and downwind is also a stable platform for the beginner, and many sailors have learned their skills in a Scorpion.

But being suitable for learning does not detract from the excitement gained from sailing a Scorpion, which is probably why many top sailors of other classes have come to sail a Scorpion.

Visit the Scorpion web site at: - <http://www.sailsScorpion.co.uk>

DINGHY CRUISING

It's a very well sailing around a few cans on a lake but how about going further a field?

Racing dinghies is very good at improving your skills and gaining more experience, with the safety boat on the water you can venture out on more 'challenging' days.

Sailing efficiently, gaining the best from your boat is not just important when racing, if you are cruising it can make the difference between reaching your destination before darkness or if sailing on the sea before the tide turns and you start to go backwards!

The weather also plays a much more important role therefore understanding what is likely to happen during the course of the day is an important consideration.

Mixing dinghy racing and cruising gives the best of both worlds and I wouldn't miss either of them.

The trips shown in the pictures below are serious undertakings so if you are interested build up your experience gradually, the Dinghy Cruising Association encourages sailing in company and this is a great way to dip your toe in the water.



Trip round Anglesey.



Passing under the Severn Bridge on a trip from Shrewsbury to Swansea

The following web sites may be useful

Marine Coastguard Agency

http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-hmcg_rescue/mcga-hmcg-cg66.htm

Dinghy Cruising Association

<http://www.dca.uk.com>

Words & Pictures – Tim Bowden

Caption Time

For those of you who can remember the television programme “Superstars” see who can spot a young Ron King wearing his best “Kevin Keegan” shorts, who else can you spot?



*Members of the Club on a visit to Colwyn Bay – Courtesy of **Geoffus Weiruss***

More Graduate Travels

Leigh and Lowton

On Sunday the 16th of December me and my Dad went to Leigh and Lowton sailing club to take part in the Guy Fawkes pursuit race (a 2 hour race). There were 74 boats there (good for the time of year) and we were one of the first to start with a one Streaker.

We didn't have that great a start but got ahead of him round the first buoy, but then we lost him on the next run (which was really long). We were Second for about 20 minutes and then the GP14 world champion overtook us. Unfortunately on our second lap we were beating down and the RS 400 started and took all our wind and we were left sitting there.

We managed to overtake the Toppers and then on the long run, a gust hit us, we didn't have enough centre board down and we rolled and capsized.

I managed to get over the side of the boat but the old man chose to have a swim in the freezing water instead. I managed to get it back up on my own, get in and Dad eventually swam to the boat and did the same. He had lost his favourite bobble hat!

We had lost some places but managed to get a few back.

Eventually we finished 12th out of 74 boats.

We are in the background of the picture.



Alex

(Another great report Alex – but once again Steve I detect a lack of discipline and mutinous behaviour – what's with the "old man" comment, time for the knotted end of the main sheet I think)

Colin

Summer/Autumn/Winter Training Courses

I would like to say thank you to everyone who gave up their own time to help with the topper course in the summer and autumn a special thanks to Tim Bowden and Andy Piggot. I learnt a lot through this course I really enjoyed it.

Alex

I'd also like to express my thanks to Tim for an excellent Level 1&2 powerboat course. This was held on two successive Saturdays the 8th and 15th of December and I only have the one complaint – why couldn't it have been in the summer.

The 8th was not too cold at about 5 degrees C but it absolutely poured down, we spent the first hour or so going over various points in a classroom situation and in the garage, I never new there was so much to simply launching the boat, then it was on to the water for a few hours followed by lunch, more classroom stuff (thank god) and then back out into the wet, and I don't mean the lake.

The 15th was bright and sunny with no rain, and no warmth, the photo below was of the outside temperature gauge in the car on the way home at about 16:30, yes 1 degree C, imagine what it was at 09:00 when we started.



Despite the horrible weather the course was enjoyed by all and was followed by a short test at the end just to check that we'd all been paying attention. Thanks to Tim's expert tuition we all passed and are now looking forward to using our newly acquired skills next season.

For anybody interested in learning more about boat handling this course is ideal and also great value for money.

Thanks again Tim.

Colin

The Last Word

Once again I hope you have all enjoyed this latest edition of the Newsletter. Yes I know that the section on the Scorpion does go on a bit but obviously I am biased and I've also got more access to Scorpion info/pictures than anything else. No doubt we're all the same and think our own boats are the best, well they probably are, because, if not we would sell them and sail something else. So why not send me some photos of your boat/class and tell us all about them and what they're like to sail.

As you will have seen we have also had an increase in the number of articles by other people and a big thanks goes out to you all, let's keep this up – the more the merrier.

Special thanks to **Geoffus Weiruss** for being such a good sport and for the photographs (sorry Ron I just had to do it). For everybody else beware, I now have a hundred or so photo's old and new, some good, some bad and some plain ugly – you may be next!!

Please send any articles to newsletter@shotwicksailing.org

Colin

PS Just when you thought you were safe. The phantom snapper strikes again!!



Carl & Shellie go for a swim.



Rachel goes fishing for prawns



Ian does his Billy Elliot impresion