

# Shotwick Lake Sailing



## Newsletter – October 2009

### Editorial

*Welcome back to the Shotwick Newsletter.*

*After 6 months of forced absence due to lack of content your favourite quarterly publication is back in print.*

*Once again contributions are from the usual suspects and are slightly Scorpion biased with the notable exception of an excellent contribution by Jonathan Edwards.*  
CK

### Training

*The training program has been in full swing particularly for juniors. The sessions in June / July were particularly successful. Thanks to Neil, Jayne, Darryl, Paul and the parent shore side helpers. We also involved the parents with the opportunity to try sailing in one of our Wanderer Dinghies while their children were learning as well.*



*Courtesy of Tim Bowden*



*Courtesy of Tim Bowden*

***Looking forward to future training events the details are on the web site but some reminders below:***

### **Volunteer Instructor Opportunities**

*There are a wide range of opportunities to become involved in the delivery of our training program*

*The commitment is as large or small as you wish to make it. If you would like to know more speak to Tim or Tony or email [training@shotwicksailing.org](mailto:training@shotwicksailing.org)*

**TB**

### **Nationals Preparation**

*Following on from my last account of the "5Ps" I thought that the decent thing to do would be to tell you all about how I had learnt my lesson and how I had prepared my boat for the Scorpion Nationals back in August.*

*One Sunday following racing down at the lake about four or five weeks before the Nationals Daniel and I spent a couple of hours checking over the boat and making a note of anything which looked a bit "suspect". These included a couple of worn ropes and some elastic as well as one or two fittings. The rudder blade and centreboard had a few digs and dents in so these were removed from the boat.*

*The next day the parts were ordered and arrived later that week.*

*After filling and sanding, the foils were painted and the following weekend we spent 5 or 6 hours at the club fitting the new parts and calibrating the rig. Trailer wheels were checked and bearings greased, trolley wheels pumped up and everything packed away ready.*

*The week long Nationals were fantastic (more later) and not a single problem with the boat despite the testing conditions – that was until the last race!!*



*Courtesy of Mike Rice and fotoboat*

*Testing conditions at the 2009 Scorpion Nationals at Lyme Regis S.C. Richard in 1971 is in the right of the shot. To put things into perspective the Committee boat in the centre of the shot is a 30 foot Saddler.*

*After making a great start and having a fantastic first few legs we were laying in around 20<sup>th</sup> place, battling with people who were normally miles ahead of us, we were sailing well and really going for it.*

*We rounded the top mark and set off on the first reach of the triangle, it was blowing about a F4 gusting 5 with about a 4-5 foot swell left over from the day before. No time to hang about so up went the spinnaker, we had a wild ride for about a quarter of a mile or so at which point we were hit by a big gust at the same time we reached the crest of a wave.*

*In line with everything we had been told at the various training events we bore off down the wave and gave a big pump on the sails (1 pump only).*

*All of a sudden the helm went very light and I remember thinking how well balanced the boat must be, this was short lived and I soon discovered that the rudder was only held on at the bottom – the top gudgeon having just disintegrated.*

We had to drop the spinnaker and sail another half mile or so to a safety boat that then organised a tow back to the harbour. On the way in the RIB crew informed us that it might take a bit of time as we were about miles out at that point!

So there you go again – the 5Ps, don't just check the ropes – check everything.  
CK

### **Fast Lap Trophy**

With only a few weeks to go before the end of the qualifying period Tom looks pretty safe in top spot although Ron's time on the 17.05.09 got pretty close. There is still time however so if the wind is right why not give it a go.

POSITION	DATE	BOAT	HELM	CREW	TIME	HANDICAP	CORRECTED TIME
1	23.11.08 (2008/2009)	Topper	Tom Piggot		8m-17s	1290	6m-25s
2	17.05.09 (2008/2009)	Solo	Ron King		8m-10s	1155	7m-04s
3	23.11.08 (2008/2009)	Topper	Lewis ?		9m-21s	1290	7m-15s
4	22.06.08 (2007/2008)	Scorpion	Richard Jones		8m-55s	1056	8m-27s

CK

### **Two Men in A Boat by Jonathan Edwards**

It all started last late year whilst sitting in a Lake District pub with my younger brother recovering from a very wet, cold and tiring trek to the top of Helvellyn. I got to thinking there must be a drier, warmer, less tiring ways to spend time with Justin (the afore mention brother) doing something we both enjoyed. That's when I uttered the infamous words "If I get a suitable boat, how do you fancy doing some of the bigger handicap open events together?" to which I got a resounding "Mmmm, maybe ..."

With such an unusually positive and articulate answer from my brother (he is a Laser sailor!), we then set about trying to decide on what dinghy class we should be looking at sailing. First decision was easy; it needed to be reasonably fast so that meant it would need a spinnaker to make it interesting on the runs and reaches. It would also need to be able to carry weight reasonably well, which at that time was around 28 stones; I should hasten to add we are now a much more sporting 25½ stones.

Since I was going to be the one to buy it, I had a couple of additional criteria. It would need to be suitable for use on the lake at Shotwick, which ruled out most of the asymmetric boats, and low maintenance needs meant varnish wooden boats were out too.

We finally settled on either an RS400 or a Merlin Rocket; the RS400 has an asymmetric spinnaker but carries weight well and is GRP, whilst the Merlin Rocket with a more conventional symmetrical spinnaker suits a slightly lighter crew and the GRP boats are more expensive. The Merlin Rocket also has one other useful characteristic, being a development boat the handicap struggles to keep up with the rate of development, so they generally do well in handicap fleets. So come early 2009 the search for a suitable boat got under way.

Over the winter we started to compile a list of the events that we could possibly compete in, aided by Yachts & Yachting magazine running a series of articles on the "Top 50 regatta's to do before you die". It soon became apparent that "drier, warmer, less tiring" were maybe goals that we weren't going to achieve, with many of the events being during the winter or over long distances. The final list for consideration was as follows;

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Y&amp;Y Top 50 regatta ranking</b>
Early January	Bloody Mary – Queen Mary SC	5
Late January	Steve Nicholson Trophy – Northampton SC	
Early February	Tiger Trophy - Rutland	18
Early March	Warming Pan – Hamble	
Early March	Bala Massacre	
Early March	Starcross Steamer – Exmouth SC	
Easter	Weston Grand Slam - Southampton	
April	Glyn Charles Pursuit Race – Hayling Island SC	37
Early July	Bala Long Distance race	
Early July	Lord Birkett – Ullswater SC	8
Early July	Salcombe Merlin Rocket week	1
Mid July	Abersoch Dinghy week	31
Early September	Round Sheppey – Isle of Sheppey SC	10
Late December	Grafham Grand Prix	

After much browsing of the classified to find suitable boats within the budget and the viewing of several, a boat was finally located in May at of all places, Shotwick Lake SC. Steve Hopson had put his Merlin Rocket up for sale and it suited our needs perfectly. Whilst it is a wooden Merlin Rocket, it was designed from the beginning to be a low cost, low maintenance boat. Therefore, no varnished wooden surfaces, instead it is painted inside and out. The only issue of concern was that there had been some problems with some of the mainsails pulling out of the mast track above the top of the shrouds.

My first outing was the club Spring Regatta, with Richard Jones as my crew, since my brother lives in Kent; so getting time together to practice is another challenge we have to overcome. During the first race of the regatta it immediately became apparent that I was going to need to get the mast looked at, as the top of the mainsail pulled clean out of the track. Whilst Richard and I were reasonably fast for the first time out, we just couldn't point upwind and lost lots of ground on every beat. Being a carbon fibre mast it wasn't a repair I was going to tackle myself, so I loaded it on to the roof of the car and paid a visit to a nice man in Birmingham name Phil Scott who worked his magic on it.

The first outing with my brother was going to be the Bala long distance race in early July with practice the week before, but I was due to be duty manager at work that same weekend and for once I was unable to swap, putting pay to Bala. Abersoch dinghy week was also out due to work commitments, so that meant the Round Sheppey race ([www.iossc.org.uk/islandrace/](http://www.iossc.org.uk/islandrace/)) in early September would be the first event that we could tackle.

The Isle of Sheppey lies off the north coast of Kent where the Medway and Thames estuaries meet, which means it is very convenient for a little B&B I know called Mum & Dad's. Due to good forward planning, it was also my niece's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday at the end of July, so I arranged a week off work and took the boat down to Kent for the week to practice with my brother, but most importantly delivery the birthday present! Fortunately, my brother sails at Bewl Valley SC, which is on the largest reservoir in southeast England, and he arranged sailing rights for the week for the boat. He also thoughtfully laid on the whole range of winds during the week (F0 to F6-7), as well as lunch time entertainment with fly-bys by the Red Arrows and a Lancaster Bomber, a foiling Moth and a foiling RS600. Guess which one crashed and burn the most frequently! (answer later on)

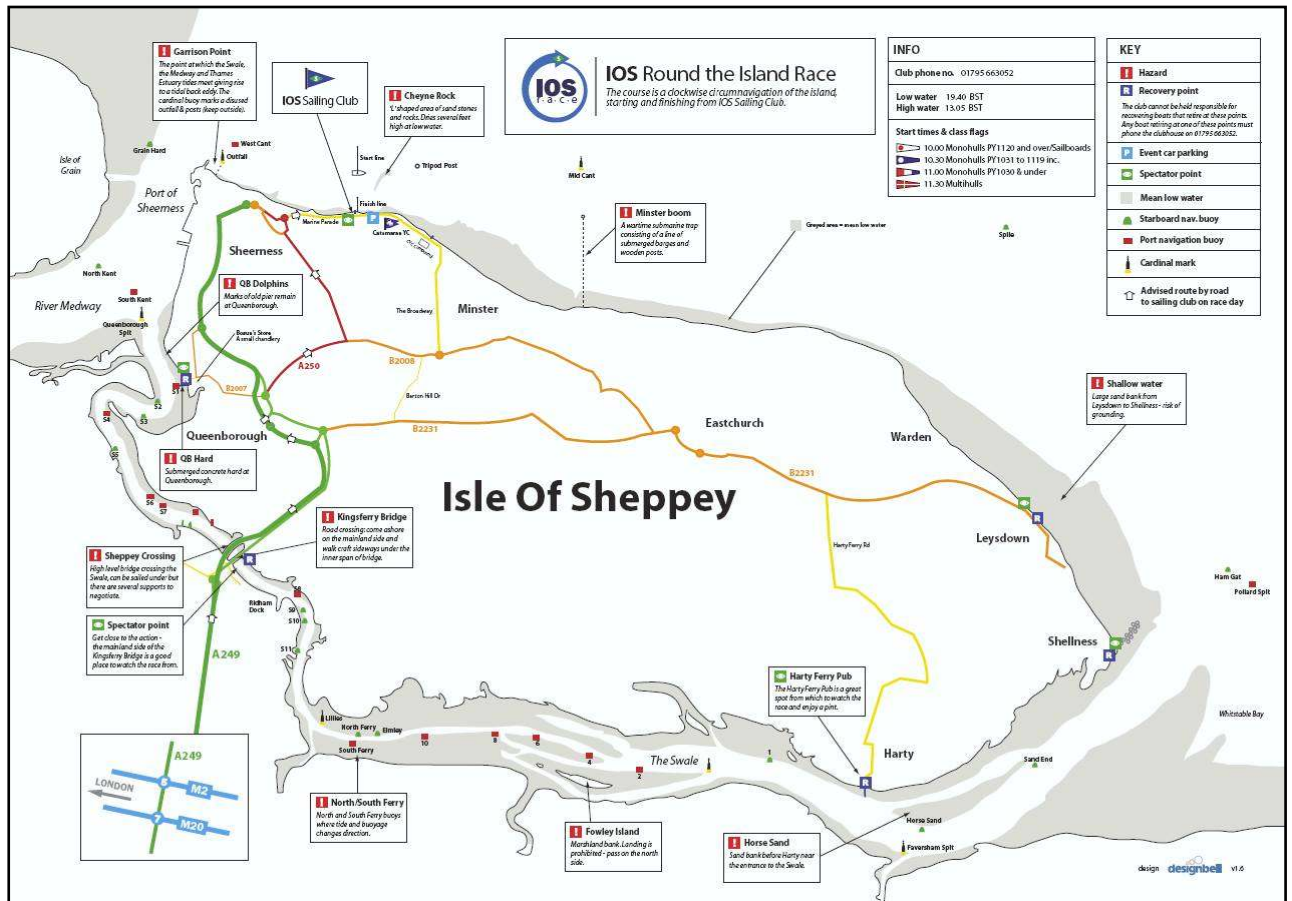
*A month later saw me once again travelling down to Kent on the Friday morning, hoping the weather would improve for the race the following day as Sheppey had been suffering from gale force winds (F7-8) for the previous few days.*



*Saturday saw us leaving the house just after 7:30am for the hour drive up to Sheppey. Our start time wasn't until 11am, but with 120 boats expected we need to allow plenty of time for unloading and rigging the boat. On arrival, we joined the queue of competitors on the sea wall waiting to unload their boats. Order of the day whilst waiting in the queue was to get the mast up, and put ever thing you would need in the boat. This turned in to a case of do a bit, drive forward 10-20 yards, do a bit more, then drive forward another 10-20 yards, etc. By 9:00am, we*

*had reached the front of the queue and taken the boat and trolley off the trailer, and put it on the beach. The next half hour flew by as we reconnecting all the bits of string in the boat, no simple job in a Merlin. Time for the briefing at 9:30am, with special mention by the race officer for the etiquette to be observed at the Kingsferry Bridge; no barging please, form an orderly queue! More on the bridge later.*

*Some detail on the race; the objective is to sail clockwise around the Isle of Sheppey starting and finishing at the Isle of Sheppey sailing club on the northern shore. Depending on the wind direction, this can be as much as 40 miles. The slowest handicap boats started at 10:00am, with staged starts every 30 minutes for progressively faster boats. There are a number of obstacles to negotiate besides the aforementioned bridge, and the organisers provide a helpful map to ensure that you avoid such hazards as the WWII submarine defences!*



The wind gods had relented overnight, giving us clear blue skies and a westerly F4-5 meaning that it would be a downwind start; under spinnaker if you were brave enough! We decided to keep the spinnaker in its bag whilst we jostled for position on the start line, only



hoisting once we had safely started. A reasonable start saw us near the front of the fast monohull fleet; we're the boat with yellow hull and blue/purple spinnaker. Initially we headed inshore to avoid Cheyne Rock, before gybing to avoid an RS600 who didn't seem to understand the port / starboard rule and heading out to sea on a long spinnaker run. The fleet split at the start with the asymmetric boats heading out to sea for clear air, whilst the singlehanders and symmetrical spinnaker boats headed inshore to avoid the tide. Along with a few of the Ospreys we choose to sail somewhere between the two.

The sea state was being kind to us with reasonably gentle rolling waves, although you had to be on your guard for the occasional larger roller, which tried to bury the bow of the boat and send you swimming. By 11:30am we had passed the submarine defences and gybed again, heading back inshore towards Warden Point and the east end shore of the Island. As we got closer to the shore, the deflection of the wind against the cliffs saw us on a broad reach, hitting 14.2 knots (16.4 mph) our top speed of the day. At 11:55am after nearly an hour of the race we passed Warden point and the fleet merged again; neither route seeming to have paid any large dividend as we slotted in 20 metres behind the other Merlin Rocket in the race, who had followed the shore line from the start.

*At this point the first of the catamarans who had started half an hour behind us overtook us, after they had only been sailing for 25 minutes!*

*Now for the first time the fleet started to spread out as those at the front got more wind and stretched away; the other Merlin was within a few minutes 200 metres ahead and still increasing the gap. Maybe we got to close in shore here, and in to the wind shadow created by the cliffs; some thing to think about for next time. As we continued under spinnaker past Leysdown we were unfortunate enough to encounter one of the hooligans of the sea, a jet skier. His idea of fun was to approach us at high speed and then just 5 yards from us do the equivalent of a handbrake turn, sending a wall of water over the boat and eliciting a few choice phrases in return. Moving on a little wetter and questioning the jet skiers' parentage, we dropped the spinnaker at 12:20pm, before turning in to the entrance to the Swale at 12:23pm.*

*The Swale is the body of water that separates the Isle of Sheppey from the Kent coast, and we were now heading back in to the wind and facing a long beat. We had already caught a few of the boats from the 10:30am start whilst under spinnaker, but now we started to overtake them in increasing numbers as we pointed higher and sailed faster than many of them. I'd like to put this down to exceptional sailing skills of Justin and myself, but I think it had more to do the amount of weight we could put on the side of the boat, meaning that even in the F4-5 wind conditions we didn't have to de-power the rig significantly.*

*In the more confined channel of the Swale, the sea condition changed in to a shorter, sharper chop, giving a more unpleasant ride. My brother also developed an annoying habit around this time, of sitting up from his hiked out position at regular intervals without warning, just as a wave approached which would throw up spray as it hit the boat. The normal result being to leave me spluttering as I took a face full of salt water, and my brother grinning from ear to ear. Oh the delights of kid brothers!*

*By 2:10pm, we had reached the narrowest section of the Swale and a much-earned rest for a while from beating against the wind. We were now on our final approach to the Kingsferry Bridge, where we would have to dismount and lay the boat on its side in order to get under. The last leg to the bridge was again a beat but now we were also battling a strong head current, which made the final approach to the bridge a tad difficult.*



*There is only a narrow gap between the pontoon and the bridge in which to land, as shown in the picture. The window shadow from the bridge and the tide both conspire to push you back in to the pontoon as soon as you attempt to sail in to the gap. Therefore, the tactic was to sail up to the pontoon and then walk the boat in to the shore. Hence the "no barging please, form an orderly queue" comments from the race officer at the briefing; offenders were push away by the rescue boat stationed in the area.*

*As we sailed up to the pontoon we were a little over 10 minutes behind the other Merlin; our Dad had followed us up to Sheppey to watch us from the shore, and was sitting by the bridge waiting for us to go through. He was also making notes of the when he saw us at different points around the course, which made writing this easier.*

*We were now to run in to problems, which would count heavily against us in the results. The*



*boat has a fixed rudder, which I was busy removing before we went in to the shore when a helpful volunteer on the pontoon decided to help us by pushing us off towards the shore! With no steerage the tide caught us, and drove the boat bow first in to the jetty with a sickening thud.*



*Despite the resulting damage, the boat was still seaworthy so we could continue. On the shore another volunteer rushed to help us lean the boat over so we could pass under the bridge. Oops, too shallow and a chunk out of the port gunwale where it hit the stones on the bottom.*

*Once under the bridge we refitted the rudder whilst standing chest deep in the water, as we would be sailing against tide and wind as we left the shore to sail under the second bridge at Kingsferry. Since the boat sits low in the water when capsized, it had a far amount of water in it when righted, making it slow and heavy as we carefully avoided the other boats and the supports for the second bridge. The flimsy nature of the transom flaps were now going to cause us to lose a lot of time.*

*With the boat sitting low in the water, the transom flaps were not rigid enough to with stand the water pressure and collapsed inwards, allowing water to rush in to the boat. The normal solution to this is to bear away on to a reach, pick up speed and allow the water to run back out of the very same transom flaps. In this instance the direction of wind and tide, the narrowness of the channel and the close proximity of the bridges made this impossible. We tried to reset the transom flaps but they kept on collapsing inwards; the water by now was above the top of the centre board case and we were only being kept afloat by the buoyancy tank and bags. We needed to land and bail the boat out, and quickly, as it was becoming difficult to handle with some much water in it.*

*The construction of the shoreline hampered our first attempt to land; the approach to the bridge had been straightened and steeply sloping manmade shores installed. With only a narrow ledge to perch on we found it almost impossible to hold the boat and bail it out. We had no choice but to re-launch and sail further up the channel until we reached the natural shoreline. After very slow and painful progress closely monitored by one of the rescue boats,*

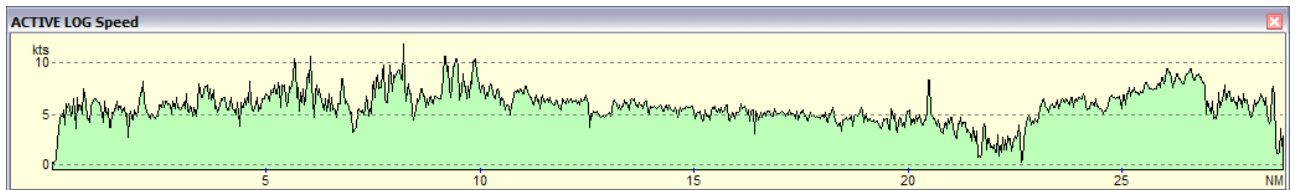


*which saw many of the boats we had overtaken sail by us, we eventually managed to land in ankle deep mud and bail the boat out. Finally we got afloat, refitted the rudder yet again and pushed on for the finish. In all this had cost us some 40-50 minutes, and our Dad was starting to get concerned back at the finish as we had not yet arrived; he was starting to think the damage we suffered when we hit the pontoon may have been worse than thought.*

*As we left the Swale at 3:50pm and entered the Medway estuary, we had one last big obstacle to avoid, a departing car transport ship leaving the shore. For once sail gave way to power. We reached the turbulent water off Garrison Point at 4:03pm, and in a patch of still water between the whirlpools we gybed, raised the spinnaker and started the run for the finish line.*

*At 4:19pm we crossed the finish line after 5 hours 19 minutes in 70<sup>th</sup> place out of 118 finishers, 1 hour 2 minutes behind the other Merlin Rocket (30<sup>th</sup>) after all the time we lost at the bridge. We had covered 33.1 miles at an average speed of 4.72 knots (5.43 mph) according to my GPS; see the track log below. Spare a thought for some of the other competitors like the Topper which took 6 hours 57 minutes to complete the course, but amazingly beat a Laser 4000 which took 7 hours 13 minutes, or the RS Feva XL which was the last boat to finish at 6:38pm after 8 hours 28 minutes. The fastest boat was a 20 foot catamaran which completed the course in 2 hours 15 minutes, but struggled to fit under the Kingsferry Bridge even when turned on its side; they had to sink the bottom hull in order to give just a few inches of clearance!*

*We may not have won any of the prizes but like all the successful finishers, we both got a certificate for completing the course, and a sense of pride in handling everything that the day threw at us.*



*The day was not over yet as we still had to pack the boat up and drive home, finally arriving back rather wearily at just after 8pm. A good hot dinner and one beer was enough to see me off to bed before 10pm; I must be getting old or something!*

*The drama didn't end there though; as it became apparent on the Monday just how lucky we had been to make it around the Island. Having returned north on the Sunday with the boat in tow, I took the boat back down to the club on the Monday evening. As I detached the trailer for the tow bar, I noticed the rope tying the boat to the trailer at the bow was loose. It hadn't been when I'd left home for the 10 mile drive to the club. Opening the top cover, I found the fitting for the foot of the jib, which it had been tied to, had sheared off. The stress fracture pattern suggests it had been failing progressively over time, and that only about 20% of it had actually been intact holding the mast up during the race. That was a very close shave!*

*So now, nearly a month after the race, the boat is in Birmingham having the damage to the bow repaired and a new lifting rudder is being purchased. As too is new stiffer plastic for the transom flaps and a larger bailer; next time we're bail out before we leave the shore after*

getting under the bridge. Once that's all been completed, we'll have to decide on which of the events on the list to tackle next. One thing's for sure, it won't be the Grafham Grand Prix as I'm working Xmas, so it will have to wait for 2011 assuming my brother and I are still on sailing terms!

To answer the earlier question, it was the foiling Moth that crash and burned the most. The helm looking even more battered and bruised when he returned to shore than I do, after a windy day sailing in the RS300.

JE

## Word Search

Z	U	T	S	E	P	M	E	T	L	F	W	Q	B	B
F	Z	N	M	T	Z	Z	U	B	I	A	R	U	P	Y
T	J	Y	O	T	E	W	A	N	D	E	R	E	R	T
S	A	I	T	I	G	D	N	U	W	E	E	K	E	E
I	V	G	H	B	P	E	A	P	H	T	N	E	P	M
M	E	R	L	I	N	R	O	C	K	E	T	W	P	D
I	L	A	J	L	R	O	O	F	A	G	E	M	O	M
T	I	D	F	D	E	C	A	C	L	M	R	E	T	O
P	N	U	R	A	S	A	T	Q	S	O	P	R	S	T
O	M	A	O	B	A	B	E	L	C	A	R	I	M	N
M	O	T	R	K	L	L	A	B	E	R	I	F	J	A
W	H	E	R	O	N	A	L	E	R	T	S	E	K	H
R	T	O	I	P	L	L	Z	F	D	R	E	C	A	P
O	T	T	M	G	U	O	Y	E	R	P	S	O	L	Y
B	O	S	S	G	R	S	S	A	L	G	E	N	I	W

Can you find the following dinghy classes in puzzle above?

MERLIN ROCKET	CHERUB	SCORPION	ENTERPRISE
FIREBALL	ALBACORE	GRADUATE	OMEGA
BLAZE	LASER	OPTIMIST	TOPPER
SOLO	WANDERER	TASAR	MIRACLE
FINN	LARK	KESTREL	JAVELIN
HERON	MIRROR	OSPREY	GULL
PHANTOM	PACER	WINEGLASS	TEMPEST
TOY	MOTH	OK	CADET
BUZZ	BYTE	BOSS	ISO

## Useful Links

**Racing Rules of Sailing** *Racing Rules Of Sailing: 2009 - 2012*

**Rules of Sailing 2009-12**

*If you want to catch up on the changes in the latest racing rules, check out these videos by Dave Perry.*

[RRS 2009-2012 Videos](#)

Or read the rules here: [Racing Rules of Sailing 2009-2012](#)

*(PDF file Opens in a New Window).*

**Please note that the above has been shamelessly lifted off our website you will need to access the links via <http://www.shotwicksailing.org/news>**

## **Nationals Notes**

*Following the 2009 Scorpion National Championships at Lyme Regis in August I thought it may be of interest to relate what went on leading up to and during the event from a personal point of view.*

*We all know who won what race and who came where from the results but they don't tell the full story.*

*Although the following is in a "Diary Format" it is not based on a diary (even I'm not that sad) and so I make no apologies for any inaccuracies cause by the passage of time and/ our alcohol.*

### **Nationals minus 6 months**

*Three boats from Shotwick wanting to go – 1971, 1974 and 1977 must try and get a few more - time to start pestering Ade and Tommy (1834) and Chris and Paul (1681).*

### **Nationals minus 4 months**

*Still only 3 boats, book the campsite, keep working on the others*

### **Nationals minus 2 months**

*Ade and Tommy are going, keep working on the others.*

### **Nationals minus 1 month**

*Chris and Paul decide to go and as Enid Blyton would say "Five go to Lyme"*

### **Nationals minus 2 weeks**

*Check over the boat, make a note of what's worn and replace it, don't want any problems. Find insurance and measurement certificates.*

### **Nationals minus 1 week**

*Check camping equipment and wash sailing gear (want to smell nice on the first day at least.*

### **Nationals minus 2 days**

*Go shopping and buy lots of healthy food – pasta, energy drinks, fruit etc.*

### **Nationals minus 1 day**

*Pack the car and boat up, double check everything, nothing missing. Set alarm for 0530 and go to bed.*

### **Saturday**

*Wake up etc, Daniela arrives 0630, hitch up the boat, load all the cakes his mum has made (healthy ingredients of course) into the car and set off.*

*Two hours later and the wrong side of Shrewsbury – first problem – s\*\*t I've forgotten to put any coats in, sod it not going back now, if it rains I'll buy one but you never know it might be sunny.*

*Midday (ish) – arrive at Lyme and get lost but eventually find my way down to "The Cob". Drop the boat off and say a quick hello to a few old friends then off to find the campsite. Find it no problem (why is it you always seem to get lost when the boats on the back and it's harder to turn around?). Carl, Shellie and Richard are already there. Pitch the tent – that's home sorted out and then back down to the club to rig the boat.*

*Decide to give the practice race a miss and save ourselves for "the real thing". Watching the race from the end of the Cob we can see one boat way out in front but can't see who it is, we later find out that it's Tim and AJ in 2014, new boat and local knowledge showing how it should be done.*

*Finish rigging the boat and then back to the campsite to get ready for the Commodores reception then back down the club for one or two drinks, food and a good natter.*



*Courtesy of Mike Rice and fotoboat  
Tim Parsons and A J Eaton in 2014*

### **Sunday**

*Start the day with a good breakfast – sod the healthy stuff its bacon, sausage and egg all round for me, crew Daniel and new lodger Tommy , can't beat the smell of a good fry up wafting around a campsite – oh and a couple of rounds of toast with a coffee – who knows it might be a long day on the water.*

*Down the club and get changed and hoist the sails – next problem – can't find the bush from the rudder blade and it's flopping about all over the place. Botch it up with a bit of nylon tube and off we go.*

***First Race** – push the start more than I normally do – yes I know a good start is essential but for some reason I'm normally back on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> row eating dirty wind all up the first beat. Not this time, front row, bang on the line and fairly clear wind, good first beat and round the top mark about mid fleet, lose a few places on the reaches (down to the weight I guess) but still doing well by my normal standards. All looks OK for a reasonable position until we mess up a tack and my life jacket get hooked on the boom, I'm pulled half out the boat and we nearly capsize, its not even windy and the bailers won't work so we spend the entire length of the run bailing by hand and drop back to last . We eventually manage to pull a few places back but not a great start to the week – oh well it will have to be one of our discards (if only!!)*

***Second Race** – push the start again and get an even better one, no real problems and we finish in 24<sup>th</sup>, not good by a lot of people's standards but we love it. We sail back to shore really pleased with ourselves, put the boat away and head for the club house where after getting changed we discover the menu – ham, egg and chips all round and just as good a value for money as the beer last night.*

*Back to the tent, get changed and back down the club for more socialising.*



Courtesy of Mike Rice and fotoboot

### **Monday**

Same routine and out for race 3.

**Third Race** – same tactics again, push the start and go for it up the first beat. Next problem, we didn't notice how much the tide was pushing every one over the line but not to worry it's a general recall, we'd better be more careful this time with a black flag up. Fifty second to the start we're pushed over again by the tide but we dip back behind the line again and are on the second row of the grid, again a general recall but we must be safe as there were at least 30 boats ahead of us.

We check the black board on the stern of the committee boat and notice that we're the first boat to be chucked out – how the he\*\* did that happen then we remember that we were over in the last minute – OOPS – forgot about that rule. Oh well that can be are discard – God that's two already!!

More ham and eggs, washed and changed and head back down the club for "Live Music Night" Excellent solo performance by Tony Gatehouse and an impromptu duet with Tommy Hall performing "Wonderwall" on the guitar and Tony on vocals followed by Tommy's solo performance of "Wish You Were Here" by Pink Floyd.

### **Tuesday**

Back to two races, didn't do too bad, no real disasters but nothing to write home about either in terms of the results but a very enjoyable days racing in good conditions. No ham and eggs this time but went for the healthy option of a feta cheese ploughmans – oh – and a plate of chips.

Night time back at the club was BBQ night and what a BBQ it was, burgers, hotdogs etc. etc. and all included in the entry fee. Totally stuffed after it and only enough room for a couple of pints so make an executive decision to give the fry up a miss the next morning.

### **Wednesday**

Wake up early and remember the walnut cake Daniel's mum has made – should go nice with a cup of coffee as a light breakfast. Next problem – can't find the cake then we spot a trail of kitchen foil leading across the field to remains of the cake wrapping at the entrance to a rather large hole in the ground – Badger or Fox were not sure but we'll keep it quiet in case we get put up for "The Pecker"

Another good race in excellent conditions but a slightly disappointing result.

Off to the local Indian for a meal (about 15 of us) and then back to the club for the AGM.

### **Thursday**

The winds got up in the night so we should do OK today. We get down to the club and it doesn't seem too bad in the harbour, looks a bit more outside though. Once we clear the harbour wall we realize how windy it actually is and the sail out to the start is "fun" to say the

least. Based on what we normally get on Shotwick we think the swell must be at least 20 feet maybe even 30!!! But we soon realise it's probably more like 6, the wind is around 23knts. Once the race gets underway and we're concentrating a bit more it doesn't seem too bad but we decide to leave the kite where it is in the bag – good name for a boat that

We finish the race without any real problems and have a quick drink and a cereal bar as we wait for the next start at which point we loose concentration and capsize as a wave breaks right over us. We get back upright and gather the remainder of the provisions up just in time for the starting sequence, not long after the race is called off as the wind has picked up to around 30knts and the tide has turned. We all sail back in and tell every one how easy it was and that it wasn't really that windy/rough, funny enough every one was saying the same thing!!!



Courtesy of Mike Rice and fotoboot



Courtesy of **Mike Rice and fotoboat**

Later that night it was fancy dress time – need I say more – if you were there you will know what I mean, if you weren't then take a look at

<http://scorpionnationals.googlepages.com/>

### **Friday**

The winds dropped a bit and the conditions are fantastic – best of the week. We got another good start and the best beat we've had all week, rounding the top mark in about 15<sup>th</sup>. We go high on the rounding to get a good angle for the spinnaker leg and start to power over the top of Chris and Rowan from Dovestone in 1967 just as they decide to climb higher to get a good angle for their spinnaker leg, it's a struggle but we just manage to sail above them. The next two legs are good as well and we round the top mark for the last time in about 20<sup>th</sup>, we hoist the spinnaker and set of again – BANG – next and last problem, we break the rudder gudgeon so its down with the spinnaker and off we go o find a safety boat. After a long tow in (estimated by the safety boat as 4 miles) – thanks lads if your reading this - we arrive back in the harbour for the last time, pack the boat away and get ready for the presentation night.

A great time at the presentation with a 3 course meal and some witty banter by our MC for the night, we even won a prize, not for the sailing but a spot prize with our sail number being pulled out of a hat – but hey a prize is a prize and the P&B bag has come in very handy.

### **Saturday Nationals plus 1 day**

Up early, pack the tent away and set off back home. No time for breakfast so stop on the way home at a roadside butty van for a ..... bacon butty.

### **Conclusion**

Another fantastic Scorpion Nationals with Lyme Regis sailing club doing us all proud, great venue, cheap beer and of course fantastic ham egg and chips (oh and Feta Cheese Plughmans).

Ade and Tommy enjoyed it so much they came straight home bought a new boat (1969) and have booked for Looe already and Chris and Paul enjoyed it so much the keep doing open meetings.

Now lets if we can make it 6 Shotwick boats for next year.

All photographs courtesy of Mike Rice at fotoboat – full gallery here: -

<http://fotoboat.thirdlight.com/gallery.tlx?containerid=94928>

CK



**Embarrassing Photo Time**



*Answers on a postcard please.*

## **Club Member in the Spotlight - Richard Jones**

*I started sailing when I was 10 years old as something to do when my Mum & Dad took myself and my brother to the sailing club. Sailing on occasion in Scorpion 1847 I learnt the basics. It was at Christmas 1997 when I got my first boat, an Oppi. My Mum and Dad named it "Dippy Shippy" (we won't go into the reasons why). I couldn't wait to get it on to the water. I remember the first time I sailed her it was great just to sit in the boat. Not that I knew what I was doing at all. Over a year or two I learnt how to helm and basically move around the boat. But I quickly wanted to progress to a boat that would actually tip over!!! I was lucky enough to have saved up enough pocket money to buy a Topper. I was so chuffed I couldn't wait to try it out. I started racing against Tim Bowden at the club. We had so many good races that were*



*closely fought over a year or two but I was a growing lad and out grew the Topper. This gave me the perfect excuse to get a Laser. I was fortunate enough to buy a laser that had both a radial rig on it and a full rig. This meant that I could learn the ropes in the radial first. Amazed at the speed difference I loved the Laser radial. Even kept up with the Scorpions on the windy days. Having a few fun years it was time to try the full rig out as I was*

*still growing. However it was only after a short while I started to helm the Scorpion with my at the time girlfriend crewing for me. It was exciting times as I got to helm a boat with a spinnaker.*



*The chance to compete in the same type of boat as my Mum and Dad sailed, it was fantastic. Even though my first Scorpion wasn't up to much as it was a home build, quite old and taking on water not to mention it was becoming very heavy.*

*I started crewing for my "Uncle Colin" the next season as both of our crews moved on. It was at this point sailing changed for me. I learnt a lot from Colin be it tactics to boat tuning even to forgetting*



tent pegs!!! I sailed with Colin for around two years. This is where we started to do the open circuit in the North for the Scorpions. Most of the Scorpion events with exception to a couple were two day events. This meant camping over. One year we turned up to Grafham and it was really windy and freezing cold, when setting the tent up we realised we had forgotten the tent pegs. I think it was Colin's fault but as it was my tent. I found it hard to shake the blame. We managed to scrounge about 6 pegs from everyone else.

In 2003 Colin and I did our first nationals together. We finished 39<sup>th</sup>. We were both delighted as we were first club boat!!!

It was in 2004 my good friend Stuart Hopson and I had the opportunity to buy a fairly good Scorpion together and we did the 2004 nationals at Sidmouth together. We finished 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was crazy winds that week. The waves were so high and the wind was so strong. It was terrifying. But with Stu at the helm we only capsized after the races!!!! In 2005 Stu had moved onto Cherubs as he was in to development classes which left me without a crew. Fearing I would not be able to participate in the nationals in 2005 I was given the opportunity to sail with Carol Haines. It was a fantastic chance as she is a mind of knowledge when it comes to sailing. It was with Carol I had my most memorable sailing experience which was leading one of the races at the nationals, just to look back and see 60 or so spinnakers setting behind me. Finishing 14<sup>th</sup> overall it was by far my best result ever. Since then I have sailed with a few people but at the moment I have teamed up with Ed Barnes of Notts. county sailing club and have had some great results. As for the future I will always be chasing the goal of being National Champion.



RJ

(Editors note – It was definitely Richard who forgot the tent pegs. He also forgot to mention that every Scorpion bar none that he has sailed in he has managed to break – normally the twinning lines).

PS It is not Richard sat on the little boy's knee in the embarrassing photo.

## **Thee Last Word**

*So that's it – the end of another Newsletter and almost the end of the sailing season, I say almost because we still have the "Frostbite Series" to go although looking at the weather over the last few weeks we may need to change the name.*

*I still need more items for the Newsletters so please, please, please send in anything you may have.*

*Colin*

*Please send any articles to [newsletter@shotwicksailing.org](mailto:newsletter@shotwicksailing.org)*

*Colin*