

Hornet

May 2017

MAINSHEET

**Chairman's report
Dinghy Show report
Crewing for Hogan
Battengate— A sordid tale**



Editorial

Members see little of the behind the scenes workings of your committee. This year has thrown up a lot of curve balls, especially in connection with the Championships. Eric has been working his bollocks off to sort out the problems. The best thing we can all do in appreciation is enter the Champs good and early. It makes things so much less stressful knowing we will be getting a good turnout as well as helping our cash flow. The entry form and accommodation form are attached with this Mainsheet so **do it NOW**, thank you.

The first open meeting, at Port Dinorwic, is fast approaching, so dust off your drinking hat and get on down to the land of the Dragon. The locals have the potential to get several boats out.

Keep it wet, cheers Strangler

Front page. More stickers than an Escort XR3i. **Eric and Lucy at the Exe Regatta last year.** If you have any photos that will pass the Board of Censors please send them in to the editor.

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Hornet Sailing UK

Chairman's Piece

For all that have received this, can I say thank you for paying your subs. Some quick reminders:-

2017 Colwyn Bay National Championships

Whilst we can't guarantee the weather or dolphins, we can guarantee the same standard of Race officering as last year as Dougal has kindly agreed to come and help again as PRO with a friend to act as AOD..... Jon Thompson, who ran the Atlantic Games recently with Dougal (that was a complete success). I have a long list of items required to make the championship run smoothly and am working through that. It is my intention to travel up to Anglesey and meet Taffy from Colwyn Bay along with Jo and Pippa who have been hard at work on the ground before the PD Open in May. I will tie up any loose ends at/after the open.

There has already been a flurry of people saying they will be coming and its promising to be another "full" event.

It would be very helpful if you haven't entered yet if you could either enter now and get the discounted price or at least advise if you are coming – that enables me to arrange the required rescue boat cover etc all of which impacts on the overall event. We are having to pay an initial block entry fee (even if we don't make the number of entries required) with extra costs over the fixed number range.

What we don't want to happen is getting a penalty charge for exceeding agreed numbers by just one boat.

Jo is arranging the committee boat and Pippa has arranged camping.

The camping has been arranged just across the road from the Race office and beach. Pippa has spent a lot of time negotiating with the Council so that we can use the Park area and the Car Park – the council is "roping off a section" and providing security. We have also access to covered areas and the Rugby club bar.

The council has to be guaranteed an overall figure for the camping, so Pippa has arranged that and has suggested that she would cover any shortfall, which has got the process agreed and underway. We obviously can't let Pippa be put in that situation, so again it would be great if as many of you would all camp so we can cover her costs without having to pass a bucket whip around during the event. The cost will be no more than other camping venues (The other camp sites are about 3 miles away). Please can you indicate as soon as possible if you are going to be using the camping we have arranged...that all helps to remove the stress of organising the event, so would be appreciated.

2018 European Championships Thorpe Bay

We have now secured a venue for the 2018 Championships which will be SE coast Thames Estuary at Thorpe Bay Yacht Club. Again there will be camping adjacent to the boat parking.

More will come out later, but the agreed date for your diary is 11th to 15th August 2018.

As a final reminder, you need to be a member of

the class association to race your Hornet, particularly at Championships and Open meetings, but under RRS at any event.

We have had to take out insurance this year as it has just been discovered that the majority of class associations didn't have any and there were possible liability situations. The RYA has arranged specific cover with their insurers that class associations now have an option to take out. Having looked into the legal issues and possible liabilities, we have taken advice and have arranged to pay for that insurance to protect both the committee and its officers but also the membership, who apparently could also be jointly liable. This has cost just over £310 for the year, so unfortunately we will have to discuss this further at the next AGM with a view to some in-

crease in subs this summer.

All the best, Eric



Dinghy Show 2017

The usual gathering of the Clans at Alexandra Palace occurred again in early March. Thanks to the efforts of the committee an excellent stand in a good position was secured.

With enough space for two boats Eric took 2192, launched at the Herne Bay Nationals last year, and Sam brought along his new steed fresh out of the mould from SP Boats. In two shades of grey the other 48 were left to the imagination. The show seemed reasonably busy and the Hornet stand was always full of activity. The Tigers Head Trophy displayed prominently helped pull in the crowds.

On the main stage Dougal Henshall talked about the various IYRU and ISAF trials, the Hornet featuring and performing well in the early days.

Thanks to Peter Mike Eric and Sam for their hard work and several helpers who manned the stand.

It seems that Suzuki have ended their sponsorship of the show and the rumour is that there may be a change of venue next year, [the four day London Boat Show in January?]



Crewing for Chris Hogan

Nic Wymer

The Hornet class arrived at Port Dinorwic noisily with Julian Bridges who proceeded to show that a trapeze boat could be competitive in the relatively tactical and tidal waters of the Menai Strait. A few others followed into the class and soon there was a nucleus 3 or 4 boats including long time friends of Chris- Mark McGarry, John Jones all regularly competing and starting to travel to events, Robert Morsley (Moley) joining in with this too. Chris joined the class with 2115, quickly showing the rest of the fledgling fleet the way to go on a regular basis.

He and Dave Pritchard, his then crew and a number of other Port Dinorwic boats took the ferry across to Holland where the Europeans were held on the Markermeer near Amsterdam. He formed a friendship with the winner Mark Hazelwood. Mark had shown some devastating speed at the event sailing in a manner more typical of the Fireball, low and fast upwind compared with most.

Around this time I jumped ship to sail with Chris, starting with getting quite involved in a winter long woodwork lesson on 2115 with many tweaks borrowed from Mark's boat with Fireball and 470 ideas

added and a lot of ply thrown away. The infamous little book of settings made its first appearance to me at the January events that year and it was a constant companion for all the sailing after. Queen Mary, Blackpool and Fleetwood, Leigh and Lowton all proved useful shakedown each year along with trips to see Mark Hazelwood and Richard Estaugh developing sails that were fuller, harder leeched and more suited to footing off and planning.

Every event was logged, rake, spreaders, what did and didn't work and crew helm debriefs that would last the whole journey home and went into every detail. 95, 96 and 97 provided a consistently improving boatspeed and many, many weekends travelling down to Essex, Hampshire, Kent and anywhere else there were Hornet open events, when there were none it would be trips to the biggest handicap events we could find all the while tweaking the boat little by little, different masts, re-cutting sails and as ever thorough debriefs on the trip home. He had a spell working in Glasgow at one stage and was still driving down to North Wales to do the Wednesday evening race and heading back to Scotland for a working day on Thursday.

Weekends with no events happening and we would head off to sail around the waters at Holyhead, Chris very aware that too much time spent sailing in the tides of the Menai Straits could undermine the

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the post**

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importance of pure boatspeed.

Stone Nationals finally paid off with the first Nationals win which would be the first of many for Chris. We came second the following year and I could no longer put the weekends in so stepped down and Tim Hall went on to sail with Chris and win the Hornets again in 1998 before he turned his focus to the Squib Class where sailing with his son Mark he dominated like no other.

How many hours I spent in the car, in the boat, under the boat and sailing the boat with Chris between 94 and 97 I have no idea but I learnt more about the craft of incremental gains then than I ever had before and the importance of methodically logging

everything. Above all else it was never just about Chris, it was always a team thing and whoever was crewing him always felt valued. It was no wonder people queued up to crew him.

We sailed together in his Classic Fife a few times in the last couple of years, it was like slipping into a favourite pair of shoes, barely a word said when the race got tight and immensely enjoyable.

Chris had an immense amount of talent but never one to shirk hard work he reinforced that talent with putting in the hours to ensure he had both the skills on tap, the equipment (boat and crew) in place. He was a grafter and proved that putting the time in and having the talent could pay dividends.

Battengate

An everyday tale of sad and sordid

'up yours one-upmanship' in the Hornet fleet.

Dougal Henshall

When compared to life within the Hornet fleet, the big scandals of the past might appear to be mere storms in a teacup. Watergate? Boys playing at boy things! Lewinsky-gate? Pah, an older guy with a younger woman....way to go Bill, just pay the dry cleaning bill next time! (Gosh, Pink Floyd were a full 25 years ahead of the game when they sang 'Have a cigar' on Dark Side of the Moon). For the real oldies, the Christine Keeler scandal, that spawned the film of that name, that was a real 'fill your boots' moment but was nothing that you wouldn't find at one of the better Open Meetings. In the land of the Hornet, a gender bending night with two dwarfs and an Alsatian was the best preparation going when you had a race to win the next day.

Now one hot-bed (hot bed maybe being an operative term in more ways than one) for the Hornet inspired antics had to be Weston Sailing Club. In hindsight, some of the goings on there really do make one wonder what we thought we were up to! Yet the New Year's Day boozy 'brawl in the snow' was fuelled by a dare/forfeit as to who was going to try and seduce another sailor's girlfriend. Surely this was normal, healthy behaviour for a Hornet helm.....or at least, it was. The antics of Stan and Lance, Gareth (who can forget his excesses), Adrian Williams and others whose names will be missed out to avoid Mainsheet joining Katy Hopkins in the libel courts, were the very stuff of the Hornet Heritage.

Weston really was a club where it was all happening, with innovation being spread across many of the home fleets, with the focal point being the Larry Marks Chandlery in Woolston. One of the classes that was strongly supported was the International Contender, where Tony Smith with his boats and rigs had finally broken the stranglehold of Rondar Boats and Banks. With Dave Pitman an ever-present

force at the Club, this was the first of a number of scores to be settled. Now those who remember Weston, back in those halcyon days would recall that the Chandlery was run by Alan Wright, owner of the prettiest Hornet ever built (and the only Hornet to have a four-digit sail numbers starting with a 3 courtesy of an RYA screw up). Desperado was simply stunning, it would be 'boat of the show, or to be more correct, boat of any show' if only Alan had been prepared to put the boat on a stand. It was.... gorgeous, beautiful and after every sail Alan would hose his boat down and then chamois leather it dry. The boat was quick too, but the race situation wasn't helped by the fact that despite Alan being a very clever technical sailor, too often he let the analytical side of his nature get in the way of that 'seat of the pants' gut feeling that is such a part of sailing the boat.

The chill in the dinghy park was then taken down to that below sub-zero by your humble scribe. I was sailing 2046 Ginger Nuts with the irrepressible Kieron as crew. Kieron was a typical Hornet crew of the time.... a hell raiser, hard party goer with an amazing ability to consume alcohol with Gareth. He was also pugnacious with a capital P which suited me just fine. Things took a turn for the worst when Alan came down to race Desperado at Weston. In the typical on shore breeze, the lap ended with a mark rounding at Boundary – a wooden post just off the clubhouse at Weston which often requires a full 90° turn. Alan and Desperado only left a small gap but Kieron and I needed no further invitation and dived into the space (I'll maintain to my deathbed that there was room) only for Alan to belatedly try to close the door. With a great deal of shouting, we forced our way through and in doing so, left our calling card as a graunch along the hull of Desperado. And blow me down if the same thing didn't happen the next lap around, at which point Alan sailed for the shore and didn't do the final lap. Score one for the bad boys in Ginger Nuts! Now I tell this story as it is germane to what happened next.... suffice to say that there was some ill feeling in the dinghy park.

park.

And it was about to get a whole lot worse! Word reached my ears that Alan had decided to turn the clock back and develop a new take on the fully battened mainsail in a collaboration with Tony Smith. Back then I was always in and out of Bruce Banks (Banks Sails) and in a rather mischievous way I mentioned my little gem of 'market intelligence' about the new sail. Talk about a red rag to a bull! What an opportunity to settle some of these old scores! By the end of the afternoon a design had been settled upon and less than 36 hours later, a new Banks fully battened main was complete, numbered up, bagged and in the back of the car. My 'shallow throat' contact had let slip that the new Smith sail would be debuted at Weston the following day, with the event attracting a lot of attention within the fleet – everyone would be there.

In the end, the deed was simply done. All I had to do was ensure that I was at the club early enough to stake my claim on the technical high ground (the moral high ground would be another matter). An

early start saw me at Weston with the cover off and the promise to the assembled throng of an exciting development. In the end the timing was superb, for the sail was out of the bag, hoisted up the mast when it was being closely examined by a growing crowd that were gathered around Ginger Nuts! I had Kieron and Dave Pitman on hand in case there was going to be any rough stuff, but in the end, they weren't needed. The eagle-eyed observers had already spotted Alan's customised mini-van coming down the hill into the club car park and there was what can only be described as a 'pregnant pause', punctuated by some low sniggers from those who had recognised the importance of what was going on. All eyes were now on the car park and on Alan's van that had screeched to a premature halt. Would there be a sailmakers confrontation? It was not to be, for in a spray of gravel, the mini-van had done an abrupt 180° turn and was last seen accelerating away out of the car park, not to return that day, the following day nor the weekend after. Eventually the Smith fully battened mainsail did make an appearance in a mid-week evening race but by then the story was well known and besides, the Banks sail had been seen, commented upon and was out there winning races. It is fair to say that the episode did little to engender feelings of harmony down at Weston, if anything it just drew the battle lines up even deeper than before. For those interested in the technicalities, I felt that the fully battened sail was just awesome in breeze to the point that I felt I had a clear boatspeed advantage offwind. It wasn't bad in the lighter stuff, though harder to read than a conventional Dacron main. Today, with Mylar and

other film sails, we've all got so much better at understanding rig settings but I must admit to some surprise that others haven't followed the example. Looking back now with the benefit of 35 or more years, I must admit that the whole tale of 'fully battened-main gate' is one that I regret and if Alan Wright (or Tony Smith) ever get to read this rambling report then I hope they'll accept my apology. My *mea maxima culpa* (*Three Hail Marys Mr Henshall, Ed.*) should be seen in the light of where the fleet was back then and the relative goings on with hull moulds, sails and a whole lot more. That doesn't deny though that it was a mean, cheap trick.... but one that developed a superb sail that should have deserved a better fate than to just be known as the most gigantic of "screw you" moments.

Maybe it is time for the class to think again about fully battened mains, just do it for the right reasons and it will work.....and you'll be able to sail without that guilty conscience!

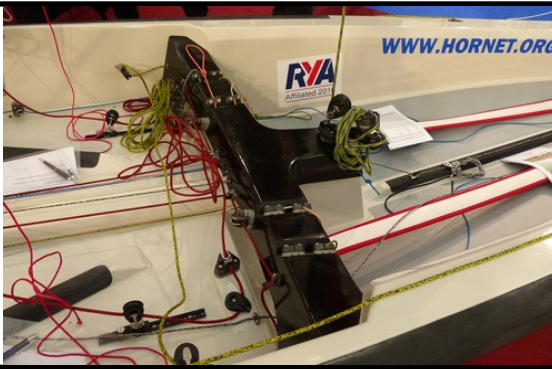
They say that pet dogs end up like their owners (or is it the other way around)? In the same way, do crews get more like their helms. In this case, the trapeze artist was none other than Mikey Todd, another hot Hornet crew who would go on to greater things! It wasn't a bad picture but a shocking day, caught on camera by Hornet helm Adrian Williams. P*ssing rain and blowing old boots, racing had been binned, but what better day to demonstrate the virtues of going fully battened!



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Next Issue Autumn 2017

Send your contribution to -
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Answers to the crossword in the
January edition

Fixtures 2017

Port Dinorwic 6/7 May

Stone 3/4 June

Exe Regatta 8/9 July

Colwyn Bay Nationals 12-15 August

Maylandsea 2/3 September

Rutland 28/29 October **Revised date**

Also Handicap events -

Various at Bala SC

Lord Birkett Trophy, Ullswater 1/2 July

Updates will be put on the forum and
Facebook.

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Montage of proposed new house
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New house built to look like a
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