



Whitstable Yacht Club newsletter

Summer 2010

Whitstable Yacht Club, 3-4 Sea Wall, CT5 1BX

office@wyc.org.uk - www.wyc.org.uk

This year's entry tally was up - 70 boats included a generous handful of visitors, most of whom come back year after year. They must like us. While the various cats were the greatest presence on the water, the largest one-design fleet by far were the Tasars. All 17 of them. We do have the nationals at Whitstable next year, and this always boosts the numbers of a local fleet, but what a pity it would be if the current level of enthusiasm waned after that.

Once again our insurers, **Towergate**, made a very generous donation and our account manager Turgay Yoldas (who turned out to be a friendly Aussie) spent a day at the club, meeting and greeting.

Credits first. A huge thank you to organisers Andy and Fiona Clarke and their extensive and willing team. Another one to Ian Embry for his race officering talent so cheerfully given. It takes twenty or thirty people to run a week like this and all of them have taken time off work so that others can race.



Jason Wild and Carla Stephens: the commodore wins the general handicap class - photo Champion

The weather was luvly but the wind did some interesting things and curtailed one day's racing. Nonetheless, 6 of the 7 scheduled races were completed and there was a long (very long) distance race on the final day. A Cadet race, too, thanks to the generous loan of the sailing school Picos. Perhaps Jason shouldn't have watched. His finger nails are growing back now, though.

Evening entertainment included music from professional combos and *Wycked Witch* (our own WYC divas), a quiz which raised over £100

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The cadet race rules 'evolved' (shall we say) as the morning wore on. Something to do with more than thirty cadets, eight Picos, one mark, one rescue boat and a lot of balloons. No one really knows who won but everyone got very wet and a lot of ice cream was consumed. Who needs prizes?

for the RNLI and a visit from the Kent Circus School (which, sadly, we hear is disbanding).

Results: *Large cats:* Pat and Ben Harrison. *Small cats:* Pete and Dawn Barnard. *Lasers:* A.Thear. *Laser Radial:* Peter Raymer. *Tasars:* Steve Nation and Yvonne Parrott. *General Handicap:* Jason Wild and Carla Stephens (Stratos). *Slow Handicap:* Alex Lloyd and Issie Bruton (Mirror). *Asymmetrics:* Jack Kilburn and Tom Bruton (49er).

Race Officer Guide

A reminder that a guide for race officers is available on the club website. Before you arrive for your RO duty this year, please take the time to read it. And please arrive at least an hour before the starting time - two hours if you expect to be on the committee boat.



more Whit Week photos on the Champion Marine Photography website

Jack Kilburn and Tom Bruton won the asymmetric fleet racing in a 49-er.

Jack's international Laser campaign has had to be abandoned because of a bad knee. Fortunately, he is able to trapeze on it.

photo Nick Champion



They practise every Tuesday in the club:- Debbie Lowes (vocals), Simon Luckhurst (keyboard), Ali Nicolson (guitar), Ian Hender (guitar), Jon Bloice (guitar), Mark Fagg (guitar), Will Lowes (guitar), Jill Fagg (drums) - photo Don Sims.

Dart 18 Beach Footage

WYC member William Lee has been at it again: by using stills from the club webcam he has put together a thoroughly watchable potted story of the comings and goings during the Dart 18 open meeting in May. Have a look

<http://www.youtube.com/user/1888081808881#p/u>

... and don't forget to congratulate club manager Melanie Rogers who, sailing with Dan Norman, won the event from a highly competitive 36 boat fleet. Once again Whitstable gave the Darts some draughty conditions to test their mettle.

Summer Holiday Food

During the school summer holiday period food will be served at the tea bar between 12 and 2pm at the stunningly good-value prices which we are becoming accustomed to. David Lowes and his merry band are giving us excellent sandwiches, snacks and hot meals at prices we really can afford.

Boat Auction

Each year at the spring working party, boats for which dues have not been paid and whose owners cannot be traced are moved to the Chalet Park. Disposal of these boats is by way of a sealed bid auction in accordance with the procedures laid down by the Royal Yachting Association. This year's bids were opened a couple of weeks ago. The saga ends for this year.

If you are reading this, yours is unlikely to be one of those abandoned boats, but the same rules apply to apparently abandoned trailers and trolleys, too. No up to date sticker, no legitimate parking space. No legit space, zero tolerance.

Wednesday Evenings

More Wednesday evening races than ever have been programmed this summer. With less than perfect tide times, the sailing committee went for broke and scheduled as many races as practicable. Maybe not so practicable if you have a 6ft draft but, sorry guys, you are in the minority and we do our best.

Thank you to the volunteer race officers for this series. No one is rostered, everyone who has been on duty has given willingly of their own sailing time.

Bar Prices

To avoid two price increases in a short period, we held our bar prices steady until after the June mini-budget. Unfortunately, the increase became inevitable, owing to supplier increases and the March budget. Be assured that the Bar Committee treads an exceedingly fine line between giving members a good deal and not making a huge loss for the club.

Bottoms up!

Peter Hamlyn

Peter Hamlyn, one of the few WYC members who escaped to the US of A, died a few months ago. Peter made a donation to the memory of Frank Dwyer but sadly did not live to see his investment made in a new club rescue boat.

The Swale Regatta

Whitstable's cruiser fleet enjoyed perfect conditions for this year's Swale Regatta in June. Twenty-seven cruisers took part and it was the best three days racing that I can recollect.

The first race took place around the buoys in the Medway in light conditions and Queenborough Y.C. hosted the evening meal.

Saturday's race started from the Tripod and finished in the Swale. This involved very close racing in a good breeze with good spinnaker run. The Harty Ferry Inn was our evening venue with the Whitstable Sea Scouts our trot boat. The wind for Sunday's race was again light, just a short race around the buoys in Whitstable Bay, giving some enjoyably close racing. The prizegiving took place at Conyer Cruising Club.



This is a good spirited event, the racing strictly just for fun. We would like to see more boats taking part next year, and I might be able to rustle up some crew for those who need them. Quite a few boats just followed the fleet round the course, keeping away from the start. Good practice for first timers.

John Pollitt

Message from the IT Officer

I've taken on the new post of IT Officer at WYC this year, leading the IT committee. The post was set up to ensure that the club makes the best and most efficient use of technology to manage the club, and to enhance the facilities for club members.

So far this year we've assisted Mel in ordering much needed new computer equipment for the office, to ensure she got the best deal and that the equipment was as future-proof as possible. We've improved the security of the office IT equipment and network and negotiated a reduced price for the broadband connection. The other big change at the club has been the introduction of free WiFi. Anyone at the club can log in and use this WiFi free of charge on their laptop or phone. We've also been working with Tinderhouse who host and manage the club website to update the website, and we've created a Twitter feed and Facebook group to get club news to members in the format that best suits them.

If you've got some computer or technical skills that you could bring to the club, or suggestions on how we can make better use of technology at the club, please let me know. I'm on the lookout for people to join the committee, or as experts we can call on to help with questions or issues. It's a great way to give something back to the club.

Out on the water I've been having fun trying out some new technology. I always carry my phone with me in a waterproof case, and recently I've been using my phone to take photos on calm days before the race (some of which have been used in this newsletter), and also to record my GPS track and play it back afterwards. I've got an HTC Hero phone running Android, and use the Google My Tracks application to record my GPS track. I then download this to mapmytracks.com to view the recording. If you have an iPhone, or one of a number of other GPS enabled phones you can also do this using the Mapmytracks application.

If you want to have a look at the tracks I've recorded on recent sails, (including most of the Whitstable Week races) go to <http://www.mapmytracks.com/Thegovier>. Two interesting statistics that I've got from using this service: The average race distance for the Small



Cat class is 10 nautical miles and my top speed so far single handed in my Dart 18 was 21 knots (during Wednesday Evening race 7).

Robert Govier

Oyster Trestles

In case you haven't yet spotted the multiplicity of 5-litre plastic bottles, random yellow and red buoys and a couple of withies with flags on, there are oyster trestles to the west of our starting line which dry out at Low Water. Boats with shallow foils can get away with sailing over them at High Water but in general you are warned to keep clear.

These are commercial oyster rearing structures and unfriendly to boats, sails and people. Walk along when the tide is out and you'll see what we mean.

Beware the red can in the middle. It reads 'no mooring'. If you're cruising in, it reads 'mooring' from most angles.

To Spain And Beyond

(with apologies to Buzz Lightyear)

Whilst recovering from a major head injury accident, I knew inside that things were indeed going to be different into the future. Aside numerous issues, I had lost weight, fitness, mental cognition and I knew that seeking to re-establish myself and remain competitive in the Musto Skiff at my previous level was going to be a struggle. So as difficult a decision as that was, I quit the class and began looking for a totally new challenge; one which would revive a personal benchmark and

I was lucky that the first few times out were on flattish water, in 9kts of wind. Yet the boat would be doing 17kts off wind. I couldn't stop smiling.

Annoyingly for the spectators there weren't enough entertaining capsizes, but all that would change with the new boat. The Mach2 Moth was better, lighter, faster and had a different set up for the gearing for the hydrofoils. Learning that set up was new, and deciding to go out in 20kts and a big easterly sea one day in April proved a test too far, too early. From full speed foiling, to dead stop pitch pole, it told me that I had a load to learn still - but I'd pleased the onlookers this time!



Obviously, I really needed coaching so I took myself off, first to an event at Queen Mary SC, then to the first Foil Fest at the Mar Menor in Spain in May: three days of coaching from the current world champion, followed by seven days of racing across different

apply the skill sets I had banked from all my years of performance sailing and windsurfing.

I've always liked to push the boundaries, and I really don't 'do' slow, so discovering the foiling International Moth was a real bonus. I spent months researching the internet before ordering a new boat from Australia, buying a top spec secondhand boat while waiting for delivery, to give me some practice in taming the beast.

It's 11ft long, with a very narrow hull, hydrofoils on the centreboard and rudder and boasting an all up rigged weight of 30kg thanks to its carbon fibre technology. I knew I had to get those first sessions right to ensure I avoided another stay at Kings College Hospital.

Is it a boat? Is it a plane? No, it's super-Moth. formats. From others I quickly learnt the art of setting up the hydrofoils properly for different winds and sea states, and this made my foiling gybes far more consistent, smoother, and boat speed much faster - but with the added downside that in the first two days there were still plenty of dead stop-over the handlebar moments, this time with bruising from slamming into the shrouds at 20kts.

Going into the event, which was held in glorious warm, clear water, full Spanish sun and between 8 and 18kts of wind, my earlier steep learning curve quickly flattened right out, as the competitive racing streak re-emerged and the brain re-engaged. I put in a consistent performance to take

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Simon's Moth (continued)

4th place overall. With the racing held close to the shore, the 22 boat fleet, which consisted of Moth sailors from the UK, Germany, Spain and France, created a spectacle for the sunbathers cooking themselves on the beach.

The coaching, racing and camaraderie and support from those ten days helped me rise to the challenge of something new, something the NHS couldn't offer me. It helped me to search for and pull out those mental files of information I feared were stuck inside. Once again being able to apply myself in a discipline that I loved was a great relief, helped make me truly smile again and brought a totally different, relaxed approach to sailing. I have dominated the boat and now sail it intuitively. A year ago I would not have imagined it possible.

I'm now convinced that, whatever your sailing ability, there is always room for training, coaching, and that element of free-sailing which helps to re-sharpen the focus on the sport we all love.

Simon Reynolds

Booze on the Beach

Sad though it is, our licence does not permit us to take alcoholic drinks off the club premises. We can (almost) argue that sitting on the sea wall is within our agreement, but anywhere beyond that most certainly isn't. Please respect this and stay within the confines of the clubhouse, deck and sunken picnic table area with your alc.

Race Coach Training

Under the aegis of Laser class captain Tom Baily, race coach training was organised for those club members who had expressed interest in becoming club coaches.

Sadly, that interest didn't extend to paying for the training and subsequently becoming a volunteer class coach for the club fleets. So the training was cancelled.

The idea sprang from the RYA Adult Development Plan, engineered by chairman of the sailing committee, John Cooper. The goal was to put in place a structured arrangement for new/beginner sailors, to be achieved by training up existing members to be club race coaches and organising training days.

Initial response was positive, training sessions were scheduled and the RYA was coerced into supporting the training. That they subsequently withdrew this support was to the chagrin of Tom Baily, on whose shoulders a great deal of work was descending.

The RYA, when it was on board, required that WYC agreed to:-

- provide a Better Sailing (Refresher) course each year for members
- provide a Start Racing course each year
- provide a novice start line
- provide a novice flag system for first year racers
- work towards the RYA's Initiatives, RTC (Training Centre), OB (OnBoard), T15 (Team 15)

In addition, club coaches would attend RYA instructor conferences.

We could try again, if enough people are prepared to commit. But first, we owe Tom a huge vote of thanks for all the time and effort he put into this.



photo Robert Govier

Gerry and Ronnie Strange

We are sad to report the death of both Gerry and Ronnie Strange, a devoted couple in their eighties who died within a few days of each other in July. Ronnie kept us all smiling with her quick, acid wit and Gerry's



yarns were a delight to all who knew him. He sailed regularly until recently and was given honorary life membership of WYC on his 80th birthday, five years ago.

A telegrapher on board *HMS Cubitt* during WWII, Gerry was proud of his Naval heritage. Proud, too, of his sailing exploits. One has already appeared in a previous WYC newsletter and as a tribute to Gerry we are printing another in this issue.

Figgis Classic

The second Figgis Classic fast catamaran race was in mid-June and 13 big cat teams lined up to start at 12.15pm for the race down the Swale and back.

This event was inaugurated by and named after gentleman farmer and local tennis legend David Figgis (aka The Fig). Besotted with winning the trophy bearing his name, The Fig even stood down regular skipper and Capricorn co-owner Richard Lamb (aka Captain Fast) and brought in hired gun Richard Ledger for a pocket full of cash and on condition that he persuaded his Capricorn-owning daughter Abby not to compete. Apparently he succeeded.

Steve Gerlis in his Ferrari-red Tornado also had a new driver, persuading co-owner Mark Tuckwell to join him for the ride. Steve clearly has been taking the same tablets as Man of the Year Roy Hamilton as he too has rediscovered his Mojo for 2010. However, like their Formula 1 lookalike, promising early form faded mid-race and they didn't make the podium.

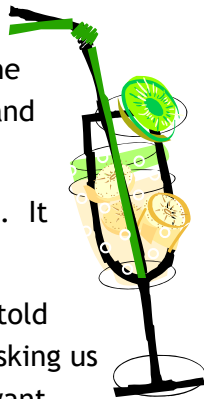
Roy himself also had ideas on the trophy except he was less successful in his choice of crew, recruiting David Lester (aka The Blind Man) for the job. Unfortunately he didn't hand over enough cash before the start and so incensed was David that he capsized on the way up the Swale out of sheer spite. 'I just didn't see it coming' he said afterwards. Yeah right!

Fetching out to the gate at Ham Gat after good starts, the leading Shockwaves of Stu & Huw and Pete & Lawrie had the amusement of seeing our Spitfire Girls Alicia & Siobhan knock half the fleet back on to starboard, some teams having vainly tried to start the race on port. Don't underestimate these girls, they mean business.

The early pace was set by, amongst others, Nick Dewhirst who was revelling in wind conditions that clearly suited his sailing style, namely all over the place and constantly changing direction. He pressed the Tornado of Mick Davidson and Grant Forward and other leading F18s hard on the way down to Sand End buoy but met his end shortly

Bar Etiquette *part 2*

- Never keep the money in your hands, we like to pick it up off the bar, especially if it's all change and in a puddle of beer.
- Never say 'please' or 'thank you'. It only irritates us.
- Always wait until you have been told how much your round is before asking us for crisps. When you know you want plain crisps, please ensure that you ask for the full range of flavours available first: it helps us to memorise the stock.
- When buying a drink for 'Tom' or 'Dick' or 'Harry', please don't ask them what they want. Just tell us their name or show us where they are standing. We like to guess and it's such a thrill when we get it right.



ooh, dear, some of us were a little tetchy over the first part, published in the previous newsletter. A temporary sense of humour by-pass, we hope.

[more...](#)

The Fig (continued)

thereafter. Having been lured into a luffing battle with Stu & Huw he swallowed the bait without chewing (no one, but no one, out-luffs Nick) and looked distraught when the Shockwave popped down to leeward and powered away for good.

The Fig and hired hand Ledger were also in the hunt and at one point they were salivating so much at the prospect of beating Stu & Huw the slick could be seen on Google Earth. That all stopped when the hired gun ran aground on the Horse Sands. 'Oh that's a shame' said The Fig loudly. Very loudly in fact.

At this stage the leading Tornado and Shockwave had broken clear of the chasing pack and reached the turning cardinal mark, Lillies. Confidently expecting an awesome kite reach all the way back to Whitstable, to their amazement the leg back was largely a fetch/close reach and with the breeze too tight to hold a kite - as Mick Davidson found to his cost when, soon after hoisting his off Fowley Island, he rapidly turned left and headed for the lee shore at pace. Which was nice.

Closing in on the two leading boats at this stage of the race was The Fig, who was very excited at the prospect of catching up. His panting was clearly helping the Capricorn's pace, so much so it could clearly be heard by Stu & Huw some minutes ahead. As could his wailing shortly after their kite

went up and they too headed for the same piece of Sheppey as the Tornado. Which was nice too.

Soon out of the creek, the Shockwave was now fetching slightly faster than the Tornado, as Mick and Grant were in the early stages of Orangeboom withdrawal and their boat handling started to suffer accordingly. Grant walked to the windward bow at one point to check if their emergency cans were still there but their speed travelling down the Swale had taken its toll. Beer gone! Mick kept looking back to see if Stu and Huw had found his cans. They hadn't.

Closing in on the club line both leading cats were now flying their kites and the Tornado kindly slowed up further to make it a photo finish on the line with Ledger & The Fig crossing in third place. The chasing four F18s led by Pete & Lawrie finished within 57 seconds of each other, which was a great spectacle from the beach as they approached the line.

Once onshore, The Fig warmly congratulated the two finishers and immediately went off to spit some feathers alone at the thought of no trophy again. Having recomposed himself after much self flagellation, he generously bought the victors a drink and looked west into the sun and pondered to himself 'was it really worth sailing through that open bridge at Sheppey three years ago for this torture again?'

David Russell

David Russell, devoted to Whitstable Yacht Club, Shearwater cat sailing and any building project which would improve life for WYC members, died earlier this year. Those who were around when the verandah was extended to its present size will remember David steadfastly refusing to relinquish his hammer until the final nail was home, despite the tempting aroma from the celebratory barbecue. More recently, David was our Wednesday evening volunteer race officer, always efficient, always reliable.



Five Stars for the Club

WYC was given the highest score possible from a health inspection over the winter.

Scores on the Doors is a government scheme which grades the hygiene/food management and general cleanliness of a premises (including the bar/cellar).

We're rather proud of that.



WYC's own Little Boat Show

On the Tuesday morning of Whitstable Week Paul George, fresh from his artistic pavement triumph outside the Library the previous day *, masterminded a mini exposé of a representative range of club boats as part of the Oyster Festival programme, with a view to explaining our unfathomable activities to as many landlubbers as possible.

A gratifying number of visitors turned up and our proud boat owners (Alicia, Siobhian, Ed, Will, Matthew, Tom, Steve, Daniel, Kate and Alison) did sterling work for the two hours of the show. Mercifully the wind was light and all the sails could be hoisted. Very pretty.



PG makes friends. It's always worth reading Paul's T shirts: this was a page from an RYA learn to sail book.

* After weeding and sweeping the Library forecourt very early in the morning, Paul chalked numbers on the paving slabs for the young artists. Perfection. He returned from his breakfast break to find the Morris Men gleefully stomping all over it.

Visitors

"A member introducing a visitor shall on entering the club premises insert the visitor's name and address in the visitors' book and sign the entry.....Non members shall not visit the club premises more than six times in any one year." (Club Rule number 44)

We risk losing our licence if we are found to be breaking the conditions of our Club Premises Certificate, so the Visitors' Book is checked regularly.

We are aware of persistent offenders.

Unsung Heroes

It's the same the whole world over. A minority of members beaver away in the background, giving freely of their time and expertise, and receive a minimum of thanks - mostly because the majority don't know, see or notice what's going on.

These volunteers make a huge difference and thanks to them we are able to save unnecessary expenditure on professional help. And that leaves more to spend on the important things of club life.

A huge thank you to all our selfless volunteers.

Crockery

Would you welcome a visitor who used the crockery from your kitchen and abandoned it to its fate at the end of the garden? *Thought not.* So why do we keep finding cups and plates (some broken) scattered on the beach? Is it forgetfulness (we hope) or laziness?

First Gavin, Second Tim

No stranger to victory in any Wanderer event, even the national championship, Gavin Barr was looking particularly pleased with himself when he came ashore from the last race of the Wanderer Nationals held at WYC in July this year.

He had beaten his son Tim. On previous occasions, Barr junior has been known to borrow daddy's boat and thrash him. Well, that is, beat him into second place. But if you're flying all the way from Rio, you have to try quite hard, don't you?

Plainly, Gavin's new boat is going even faster than his old one, now that the deck has been re-attached. It's a short but painful story, best not mentioned - especially to the builder.

Tim Barr and Ali Nicolson made a superb start in the first race but trawled their spinnaker briefly, allowing the Netley team of Mike Hamilton and David Oats to catch up. Meanwhile Gavin Barr and Mark Skipper were struggling through the fleet, pirouetting freely following more than one meeting with Philip and Jill Meadowcroft en route. They made it through to third, behind Tim and Mike and so-ooo sad to learn that Tim had been disqualified, OCS by a few inches, or a full boat length depending on whom you listen to.

Gavin and Mark took the lead at the leeward mark of the second race but Paul Yeadon crept past to take the gun in a dying wind. The next three boats, Barr senior, Mike H and Barr junior crossed the line in very close order.

Tim slowly worked through to first after initially jumping the gun of the third race with Mike second

and Paul Yeadon / Liz North 3rd. A close tussle took place down the run for 4th and 5th, the Meadowcrofts making it just ahead of Gavin and Mark.

Two passage races were run the following day in a strong south-westerly with a significant chop against the flooding tide. Tim and Ali sailed a faultless race, keeping the boat bolt upright and powering away from Gavin and Mark. Conditions worsened in the Swale. Tim and Ali held their form in the angry sea and crossed the line a good 800 yards ahead of Gavin and Mark, with Mark Fagg and Ian Hender 3rd, followed by Paul and Liz.



After a picnic lunch ashore by the Shipwrights Arms pub (yes, maybe a couple of pints were swallowed) the fleet re-launched for the final race, only 1 point separating the first 4 boats.

The wind had dropped slightly and in a fiercely ebbing tide Philip and Jill Meadowcroft made the early running but Gavin and Mark

slowly worked their way to the front. They hung on to the lead on the final white-knuckle ride to the line. Tim and Ali crossed second. Mark Fagg and Ian Hender had been in 3rd place but suffered a dramatic capsize under spinnaker, as did Paul Yeadon and Liz North. This allowed Steve and Craig Searle to take 3rd place.

Overall results: 1st 1626 Surprise, Gavin Barr and Mark Skipper, Whitstable YC; 2nd 1282 Thistle, Tim Barr, Yacht Club of Rio de Janeiro, and Ali Nicolson, WYC; 3rd 992 Orinoco, Mike Hamilton and David Oats, Netley Cliff SC; 4th 1561 Giggle, Paul Yeadon, Papercourt SC and Liz North, WYC; 5th 1541 Black Mischief, Philip and Jill Meadowcroft.

thanks to Stuart France for the photo

Cadet Captains in Carnac

Back in May, Alicia Clifford and Siobhan Lamb represented WYC at the Eurocat Open in Carnac on the west coast of France.

The sailing week started off with two days of light wind training with coach Ed Barney and a RIB supplied by the RYA, focusing on personal strengths and weaknesses of each individual team from the Spitfire Youth Squad. The first and third days of racing were

round the cans, the second the long-distance raid around the island. There was a wide range of wind strengths over the regatta ranging from a 1 knot drifter to gusting over 20. The girls' final results were 20th out of 55 in the C1 class, and 137 out of 183 in the long distance race. The results of most of the Youth Squad were very close and they did really well as they were competing against adults from all over Europe. A good sailing week with an excellent social side.

Colne Point and East Coast Piers

Alicia Clifford and Siobhan Lamb in their Spitfire have notched up seventh place from a fleet of 44 in the Colne Point race, held for smaller cats within Marconi S.C's super-long distance East Coast Piers Race, said to be the longest -stablished long distance cat race in the UK. Our Cadet class captains really have got the bit between their teeth now.

In the full race, Nick Dewhirst and Roger Fermore finished 19th from a fleet of 34.

In the round-the-cans racing on the Saturday, the girls were 10th out of 57.

New Asia Pacific Champion

Congratulations to Max Hunt for becoming the Asia Pacific Masters Laser Radial Master Champion back in March. It was worth travelling all the way to Thailand for a title like that.

Cadets at Sea

Annabelle Filer has a passion for seeing the younger children out on the water, enjoying their sailing. She has initiated a summer programme to encourage younger members of the club. Ian Embry is supplying rescue boat cover. Some of the dates will have been and gone by the time this newsletter goes to press but an e-mail to annabelle@scin.co.uk will receive an enthusiastic response.

Cadets must be accompanied by an adult and provide their own equipment.

WYC Cadets at the Youth Nationals

Easter week saw three of the Whitstable Cadet boats competing in the Volvo Youth Nationals at Weymouth in a competition

which attracted over 300 competitors and a lot of bad weather. In the 44-strong 420 fleet, Meia and Elin Harnett finished 40th. In the Spitfire fleet (10), Alicia Clifford and Siobhan Lamb finished 8th, Hannah Fagg and Josh Clarke finished 10th. Jack Kilburn was entered but he had to pull out at the last moment because of injury.

Day 1 brought 26 knots of wind and a 2 metre swell - also a doctor to tend to Josh Clarke when he tried to break the daggerboard with his ribs during a pitchpole and a second doctor for Elin Harnett after she fell against the mast during a capsize. Day 2 and 3 brought perfect conditions and fantastic racing. The wind dropped a little on day 4 but day 5 brought no wind at all.

Lost and Abandoned Property

Items left lurking in the changing rooms will be demoted to the scran bins and the bins will be emptied at regular intervals. Smelly socks and knickers will be demoted permanently to an entirely other bin. Other items will be catalogued and stored for a further 6 weeks. If unclaimed, they will be disposed of. Please don't regard the floor of the changing rooms as your personal season-long storage area. There isn't enough space.

The Peripatetic Mirrors...

Chipstead Mirror Open, 27th & 28th March:
Juniors: 2nd Meia & Elin Harnett; Special Prizes:
Youngest crew, Drystan Harnett & Madeleine
Watkins; Overall best club result and Kent
Travellers Mirror Team Trophy: Whitstable Y.C.



Issie, Meia, Elin, Mali, Madeleine and Drystan

Eric Twiname Championships, May: Mali Harnett & Isabel Bruton finished 6th and Drystan Harnett & Esme Shepherd finished 10th in a fleet of 15 boats.

Brighlingsea, Mirror National Championship, 29th & 30th May: Meia & Elin Harnett finished 17th, Drystan Harnett & Madeleine Watkins finished 32nd and Mali Harnett & Isabel Bruton finished 34th in a fleet of 37 boats.

Bosham Mirror Open, 12th June: Mali & Drystan Harnett finished 8th in a fleet of 14.

Chichester Mirror Open, 13th June: Mali & Drystan Harnett finished 5th in a fleet of 13.



Mounts Bay, Cornwall, June: Two Whitstable Mirrors attended. Alex Lloyd & Issie Bruton finished 6th and Mali Harnett & Drystan Harnett 8th, in fleet of 19.

... and the Other Cadets

Poole Regatta: 3rd & 4th July, 300 entries: Alex Lloyd & Isabel Bruton finished 2nd in the Mirror fleet, Mali Harnett & Drystan Harnett just behind. Meia and Elin Harnett finished 40th in the 420 fleet and the teams of Hannah Fagg and Josh Clarke (10th) and Alicia Clifford and Siobhan Lamb made their presence felt in the Spitfire fleet.

Class Round-up

Merlins: They haven't become extinct - three Whitstable boats went to Salcombe Week and three are at the nationals.

B14 Worlds: Mark Barnes took 6th overall from a fleet of 36 at the B14 world championship in Carnac on the west coast of France (a fabulous venue, by the way).

Dart 18s: Mark Robson finished 3rd overall at both the Bridlington and Rutland open meetings. So that's where he's been hiding.

Stratos: Lymington threw some really strong winds at the small but perfectly formed Stratos fleet for its nationals in July. Peter Carter and David Beeching were in the only Whitstable boat and managed a sixth in one race, ending up 8th overall.

Race Length

It's no good whingeing after the event... if you think the race is likely to be too short, have a word with the race officer when you sign on. ROs don't bite. But they might sail much slower boats than yours. Usually they'll be glad of the input.

Summer Cruise of Valerif July 1954

...being extracts of the log of a cruise undertaken by Gerry Strange and (later to become) his best man Frank Skinner in their 16ft open clinker boat in the halcyon days when guardian angels seemed to look after intrepid young sailors and their entirely buoyancy-free boats. And yes, the boat was supposed to be called Valerie but part of the E fell off so Valerif she remained.

cast: Strange, G.L. and Skinner, F.

Note: The times stated in the following log are approximate only (and yachtsmen are therefore strongly advised).

Friday 9th

2150 First stores embarked. Skinner drops bag deftly into narrow gap between dinghy and Valerif.

2200 Last farewells exchanged with incredulous crowd on beach.

2205 Hit boat carelessly moored off yacht club, his bowsprit badly damaged by our jib.

2300 One hour's hard tacking in moderate wind enables us to set course down channel on full ebb tide. Last light leaves us.

Saturday 10th

0000 Phosphorescence has to be seen to be believed. Glow from bow wave is visible even when bow is out of sight and there is a vivid light shining up through the centreboard slot where the board is rushing through the water. O, the poetry of it! Turns about on tiller but not much sleeping done. Problem of unlighted buoys solved by keeping bows on lighted buoy ahead. Masthead light working splendidly but used only when big bastard approaches (plus two frantic torches on sail).

0310 Dawn breaks early. Ted's compass functions most efficiently, the luminous north point being easily visible as it rotates slowly, evenly and continuously around all points of the card. On the rare occasions when the chart is consulted (every 10 minutes) the crew find it most laughable how their night vision is ruined for the next 9 minutes.

0500 Clacton pier visible, brilliantly illuminated, but turns out to be a moored vessel. Skinner's

exposure suit proves most efficacious and is the envy of the crew. Will be a complete success when Strange stops waking him every five minutes to prevent supposed suffocation.

0800 Skipper Skinner fast asleep after Harwich but Strange insists on waking him to see the beauties of the Orwell. Skinner admits the boy has reason on his side. These gentle slopes, wooded to the water's edge, make the Crouch seem a little mean.

1000 Arrive Pin Mill and drop anchor after best 12 hours sailing we have ever had. Toured town. No milk, no papers.

1100 One beer in pleasant little pub. Sleep most of afternoon. Ashore early evening to the Lobster thing for beer. Strikes us as tripper ridden.

Sunday 11th

0900 Tour village. No milk, no papers.

1100 Set sail for Ipswich. Light head winds. Start outboard. Goes like a bomb. Discover at full



throttle minor defect: tiller bar is still clamped. This proves to be a disadvantage in crowded anchorage.

Finally drop hook up creek by yacht club. Filthy black ooze. Beer in pleasant old Ostrich. Bus to Ipswich, splendid lunch at Golden Lion. Sleep in park. Milk and papers, toothbrush, Brylcreem. Motor back to Pin Mill, beer and sermon at Lobster.

[more...](#)

Valerif continued

Monday 12th

1000 Leave Pin Mill, strong wind run to Harwich. Strange tears sail gybing. Not his fault, could have happened to any idiot. Throw hook and down sail in basin, start outboard (like a bomb) and motor into gas works harbour filthy with red chemical water. Strange maintains to this day that we sailed in under jib.

Dull day, high wind, Dirk Bogarde in *Them What Dares*. Wished we hadn't.

2000 Leave gasworks under outboard (like a bomb) Hoist sail and run out to Spit buoy. Reach up to Woodbridge Haven in light wind. Some difficulty in discerning entrance ahead: chart obviously wrong.

2150 Find Martello towers, find entrance, chart quite right. Note racing breakers and pass close to steep Felixstowe bank as dusk is falling. Ignorance is bliss. Helped in by last of notorious Deben flow. Thought uppermost is of achieving drink in conspicuous pub before closing time. Christen pub *Ferry Boat Inn* owing to proximity to ferry. Throw hook, doesn't take and have alarming visions of being carried away from deserved drink. Kindly shout from bank offers mooring in nick of time. Mad dash to pub which we find is called the *Ferry Boat Inn* owing to proximity to ferry.

Tuesday 13th

1000 Headwinds, so motor (like a bomb) up to Ramsholt: a very pretty house (which turns out to be the pub), a hill, a wood and a jetty. Meet old salts whom we treat to a pint. Leave under coughing outboard which has just started playing merry hell for the first time. Eventually picks up and runs perfectly until tank runs dry. After refuelling stoutly refuses to do anything except overheat. Limp into Waldringfield where village idiot informs that our motor isn't firing properly.

Best sun yet. Sleep and sunbathe on beach admiring a river even prettier than the Orwell.

1700 Wind favourable so set sail up winding, tricky channel to Woodbridge. Silent running with the wind in the heart-aching beauty of an English



summer afternoon. An utter stillness broken only by the curlews, peewits, swans and a distant dog.

1830 Arrive Woodbridge, which budnips any incipient village notions. Tour town, cook on boat, ashore in evening and meet lively Yank. 'Been looking for fellas like you ever since I been in this goddam country.'

Wednesday 14th

0500-0800 Rain

1000 Leave Woodbridge under spasming outboard.

1130 Arrive Ramsholt, pint up and return to boat for food. Take this ashore in cunning sandwich form, trudge up little hill by orthodox back route to picnic site at summit. Site provides excellent view of 16ft centreboard sloop dragging downstream at approximately 5 knots. Descend cliff by unorthodox route in 5 seconds flat - Strange, not stupid, coming down hindmost. Boat secured, Skinner dons exposure suit and lugs dinghy through shallows. Piggybacks Strange to grass, sinking fetlock deep first step. Any solidity of ground entirely figment of wishthinkful imaginations. Skinner loses both webbed feet and effort to rise from knees inevitably results in prone position. Strange now sufficiently recovered to devote entire attention to unintelligible mirth at Skinner's predicament. Assault cliff and finish picnic.

1850 Reach in a moderate wind past Bawdsey and 4 more Martello towers. Surprise nude woman on beach. Nude woman on beach surprises us. Continue reluctantly to Orfordhaven. Thames Pilot Book warns of dangerous entrance with perilous tide. Some difficulty in discerning entrance, chart obviously wrong.

2015 Find entrance, chart quite right. Tide whips us in at frightening speed, water full of nasty looking whirlpools. Horrid. Reach up to Orford past Havergate Island which we remark would make wonderful bird sanctuary. Turns out to be a bird sanctuary.

2115 Arrive Orford, throw anchor near quay. Charming riverside pub turns out to be either private dwelling or incredibly poor at advertising. Pass pleasant beer and darts evening at Jolly Sailor further on.

2240 Return to quay where river and *Valerif* in moonlight make incredibly beautiful picture. Drool around quay waxing poetical.

Yes, they did get home. Do you want to read about it in the next newsletter?