



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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ERROL EDWARDS	SECRETARY	60 Ridgeway Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3EA, (0272 354494)
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## NEWSLETTER NUMBER 23 SUMMER 1992

### CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	2
BUILDER'S REPORT	2
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	3
A.G.M. MINUTES	4
CHIPSTEAD COMET OPEN	9
PERIHELION	9
THE COMET FOR REALY RAW BEGINNERS	12
CRAWLEY MARINERS COMET OPEN	16
COMET OPEN AT REDDITCH	16
ANOTHER VIEW OF CRAWLEY OPEN	17

Centre spread: Happy prize winners at the Nationals

Top Row (L to R)  
3rd Mark Wilkins, 2nd Gary Bullock, 1st Guy Wilkins,  
6th Tony Best, Ladies Prize Anne Brooke

Bottom Row  
4th Henry Jagers, 5th Errol Edwards,  
Capsize Peter Woolfson, 1st Junior Nancy Gould



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

This is the first edition of Perihelion for some time which has not contained one of Keith Lamdin's interesting articles. Certainly I am sure he needed a rest, but how to fill the empty pages?

At this point, Alan Browning (Comet 361) came up with an interesting suggestion. His research indicated that although we have many very experienced sailors in the Class Association, there are also a lot of people who buy the Comet while still learning the craft of sailing. Indeed, Alan rates himself as a relative beginner. So, he has suggested we could run some articles aimed at these people, showing that we all make the occasional "interesting" mistake, but with the intention of conveying some useful information at the same time.

The first article, which you will find in this issue, has been contributed by Alan himself and I am sure at least a few of our readers will identify with his problems. Why not share them with us all! I look forward to receiving more contributions for the next issue.

Stuart Lines

## BUILDER'S REPORT

As usual, life at AMS Marine is very hectic, and so it should be at this time of year!

The year started with the London Boat Show. Considering we were, and still are, in a recession, we did not do too badly. The Show started with plenty of interest, especially in the new Comet Charisma, but few orders; however the second half of the Show made up for that with plenty of sales.

The Duo is slowly but surely catching on. Several have gone to Comet owners, with their Comets then moving on to waters new.

I think it is quite fair to say the only serious competitor of a new Comet is a second-hand one! A good selection appears in Yachts and Yachting and it is genuinely good for the Class. Everyone who actually owns a Comet would agree with me that it is a super little boat in so many ways. Every year AMS Marine and Dinghy Leisure are getting out doing more and more demo's, trying to convert the unconverted. As usual, the best salesman is often the enthusiastic owner and so many of our orders are from people who have met a friendly and maybe over-enthusiastic Comet sailor! All I can say is keep up the good work.

It was great to see a good turnout at the Nationals, new Comet faces, fantastic weather and a friendly club.

At the AGM there was a proposal for a rule change to increase the size permitted in the hull for the self bailer (Rule 11c). In fact the dimensions listed in the rules are big enough to accept a bigger metal bailer, so the rules do not need to be changed. New boats are now being fitted with a small metal bailer but a conversion to an old boat is possible, with some modifications.

Andy Simmons

## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

This year's National Championships were held at Sutton Bingham S.C. in Somerset between 22 - 24 May.

Fine sunny weather, with wind blowing anywhere between force 1 and force 4 from the south east, attracted 34 entries from 14 clubs from as far afield as Cornwall, South Wales, Bedfordshire and Kent. The host club had an entry of six boats.

Anne Brook of Sutton Bingham won the practise race, with a lead of over four minutes over Mark Wilkins of Chipstead. Guy Wilkins, last year's champion, arrived in time for the first points race, determined to continue as he did last year. He sailed impressively to win the next five points races to regain his title.

He was, however, pushed during these races by Gary Bullock, brother Mark, Henry Jagers and Errol Edwards. The final race of the Championships saw Henry Jagers of Kingsmead lead everybody from almost the start to finish, taking first place from Guy Wilkins and Gary Bullock.

Further back in the fleet, two helms, Anne Brook and Nancy Gould, gave impressive performances and could give the male sailors some fierce competition on future events. It must be said that the hospitality and organisation both on and off the water by the members of Sutton Bingham was second to none. The members did themselves and their club proud.

Comet sailors, I'm sure, will look forward to returning to Sutton Bingham for future open meetings and maybe, one day, another Championship.

The Comet Association will wholeheartedly recommend Sutton Bingham S.C. as a future venue for class championships, whether for Comets or for any other smaller class of dinghy.

Errol Edwards

Results:

- 1st Guy Wilkins, Chipstead
- 2nd Gary Bullock, Kingsmead
- 3rd Mark Wilkins, Chipstead
- 4th Henry Jagers, Kingsmead
- 5th Errol Edwards, Chew Valley
- 6th Tony Best, ICI Slough

- 1st Veteran: Derek Coleman
- 1st Lady: Anne Brook
- 1st Junior: Nancy Gould
- Capsize: Peter Woolfson






# COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

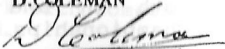
## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE ELEVEN MONTHS FROM 1ST JULY 1991 TO 20TH MAY 1992

RECEIPTS	NOTES		1st JULY 90 to 30th JUNE 91
MEMBERSHIP SUBS	1	1628	1555
A.M.S BUILDERS FEES	2	288	560
NAT CHAMP ENTRY FEE	3	650	781
OPEN MEETING PROCEEDS		0	33
HANDBOOKS		0	5
COMMISSION ON INSURANCE	4	643	535
CAR STICKER FUNDING		0	84
BUILDING SOCIETY INTEREST	5	38	0
		<u>3247</u>	<u>3553</u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
ADVERTISING	6	579	0
NEWSLETTERS	7	816	634
RYA AFFILIATION FEE		24	24
EXPENSES		148	86
"SAILBOAT" COSTS	8	104	96
PRIZES NATIONALS/OPENS	9	361	152
LAPEL PINS	10	324	0
NAT. CHAMP EXPENSES	11	530	412
DRAYCOTE EXPENSES		0	50
BANK CHARGES	12	26	0
MISC.			52
		<u>2911</u>	<u>1506</u>
SURPLUS FOR PERIOD		336	2047
BALANCE AT BANK/BUILDING SOC AT START OF PERIOD (NOTE 13).		2934	887
BALANCE AT BANK/BUILDING SOC AT END OF PERIOD (NOTE 14).		<u>3270</u>	<u>2934</u>

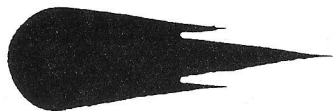
Audited and certified in accordance with the books of the Association.

M. PRESTON  
  
HON. TREASURER  
20th MAY 1992

D. COLEMAN  
  
HON. AUDITOR

## NOTES

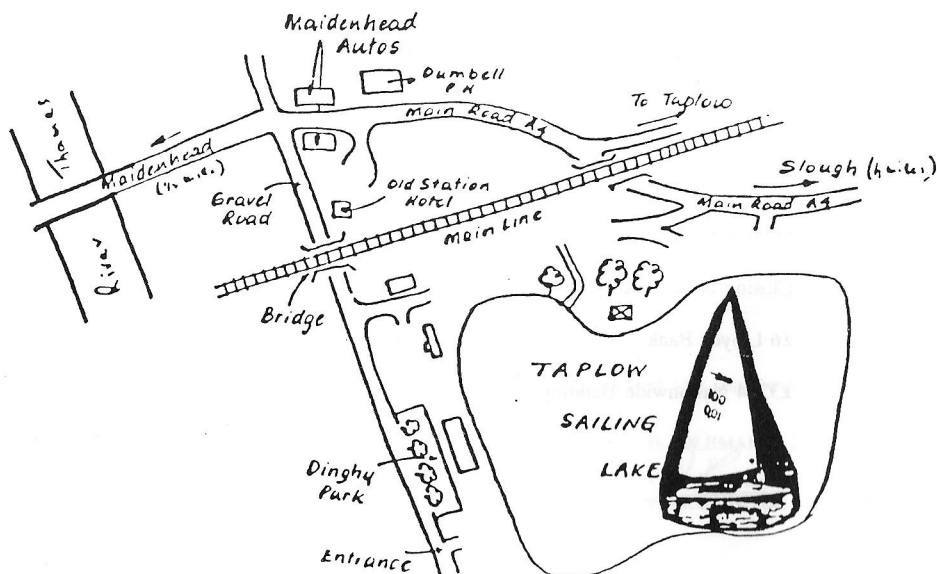
- Membership fees x 203 91/92 c/w 195 90/91
- Membership fees AMS (new boats) 36 91/92 c/w 70 90/91
- National Championship entry fees: of the total £650 - £225 is from last year's National however, banked and received within current period.
- Noble Marine Insurance commission on Comet members insuring with them:  
  
1991 £643  
  
1990 £535
- Building Society interest on money deposited for July - Dec 1991
- Two advertisements in Yachts & Yachting including production charges (6 Dec and 14 Feb)
- Cost of collating, printing and distributing 'Perihelion':  
  
91/92 £816 - 4 editions (19-22)  
  
90/91 £634 - 3 editions (16-18)
- Sailboat '91 costs for Crystal Palace
- Cost of mugs and trophies for National Championships
- Cost of 300 Comet lapel pins distributed to all Association members
- National fees for Hampton Pier YC and 1/2 costs for Sutton Bingham
- Banking charges with Lloyds - on standing orders for Association members and for cheques raised
- Starting balance of £2934 was all deposited in the bank
- Closing balance of £3270 is split:  
  
£6 Lloyds Bank  
  
£3264 Nationwide Building Society (receives interest at 7%)



# Comet Class Open Meeting On Saturday June 20th at ICI (Slough) Sailing Club

**First race 11am**  
**Entry fee £3**  
**Refreshments available**

**Details from Derek Chidell**  
**0753 884939**



## CHIPSTEAD COMET OPEN

Limpid conditions greeted a turnout of 31 Comets, 14 of which were visitors from five other clubs. The light northerly wind decreased during the first race, in which good starts were made by Comet National Champion, Guy Wilkins and Tony Best (Kingsmead). Following closely were Mark Wilkins and Henry Jaggers. This group soon established a clear lead from the remainder and in the drifting conditions the only excitement was in seeing Mark Wilkins just manage to overhaul Best and Jaggers to take second place behind his brother.

The second race saw a further decline in wind strength as it veered to a westerly quarter. Again Guy Wilkins made a favourable start, this time followed by Fergus Ross (crew to Ian Walker when Mirror National and European Champion) and Derek Coleman. The OOD had set a first leg the length of the lake from a committee boat start and Tony Best took the opportunity to pass Coleman, who in turn was passed by Mike Baxter and Mark Wilkins. Finally, in the last leg, Mark Wilkins slipped by Baxter and into 4th place behind Guy, Ross and Best.

The third race was delayed and the wind freshened to a force 3 from the east. Excellent starts were made by John Windibank, Tony Best and Ralph Rowe, but in the planing conditions they were caught by Guy Wilkins, Fergus Ross and Mark Wilkins. With many changes of order, this exciting last race finished with Guy leading from Ross and Best, with Windibank, Mark Wilkins and Rowe next.

The final result was:

- 1st Guy Wilkins
- 2nd Fergus Ross
- 3rd Tony Best
- 4th Mark Wilkins

1st Veteran: Tony Best

1st Lady and 1st Junior: Nancy Gould (Pingewood)

Ralph Rowe

## PERIHELION

The Autumn edition of Perihelion will be published in September. All contributions to me by the end of August, please.

Stuart Lines





Photo: David Hudson

## THE COMET FOR REALLY RAW BEGINNERS - PART 1

### GETTING THE COMET ON THE WATER

#### Home problems

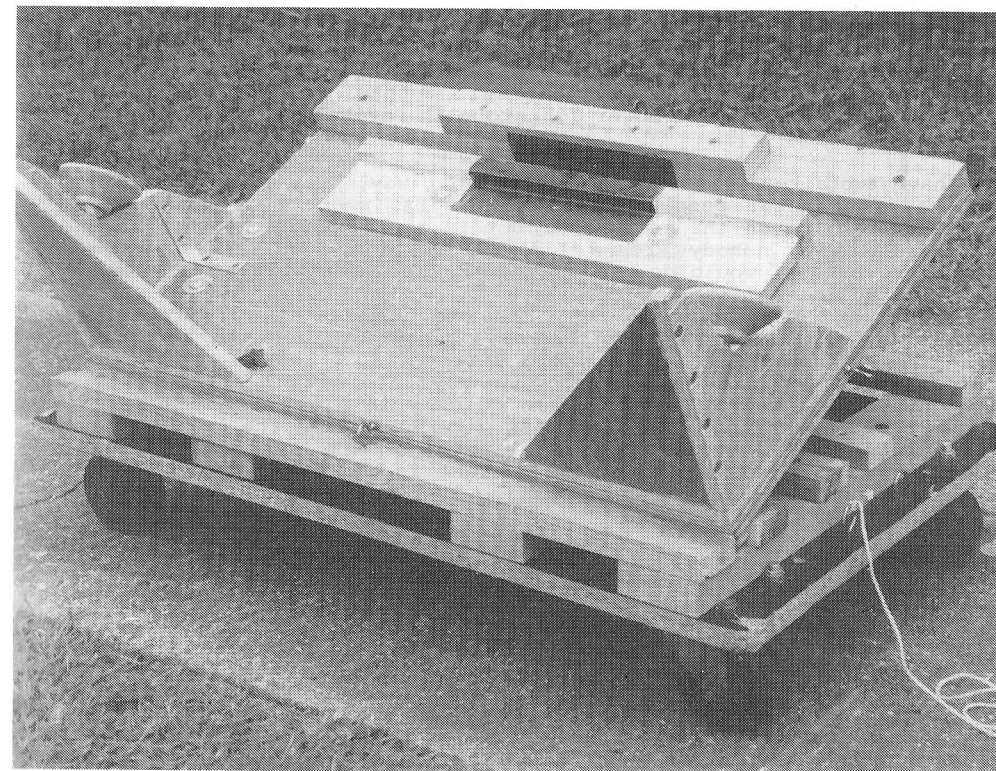
I'm pretty new to sailing as well as to the Comet, but own the only Comet in my club. It's not one of their favoured classes so I have to trail it there every time I want to sail it. Yes, I know it's a light boat, and has a nice lip round the edge to carry it by, but that assumes there are two people around - no, I'm on my own, and worse, to get it into the back garden it has to go through a 32 inch (sorry, 82 cm) wide back gate.

To cut a longish story short, my first few weeks of available time was spent making a low trolley with cradle, strong enough to take the boat, on its edge, through the gate. The tricky part was swinging the boat from horizontal to on-edge without scratching the hull. To do this I made separate trolley and cradle, one fitting into the other by a simple slot. Using the method (without help) was interesting because when lifting you can't see the cradle! (In the end I played safe by tying the cradle to the trolley). Some faith is necessary too, because once on the cradle, it has to be left balanced there while the launching trolley is moved through the gate to receive the boat.

I suppose I felt the scheme not over successful because within a few days I settled on leaving the boat tied to a tree in the front garden, regardless of what the neighbours might have thought.

#### Towing problems

So much for home problems, then came towing problems. Luckily I only had to tow the Comet with spars once, because I could leave the spars at the Club, but there seemed to be plenty of ways to tie spars on, and my efforts seemed very poor (and probably pessimistic) compared with the extremely simple task of strapping the hull to the combi-trailer with two easily adjustable straps. There seemed to be lots of ropes around and once one of the rope ends fell through the dagger board casing to dangle on the road, which didn't do it any good. The only other difficulty I had was tying the lighting board on the trailer when there was no boat on it. I managed it, but it was quite a work of art and I took a photo quickly in case I wanted to do it again !



Trolley with cradle in place

Note points of contact with the boat: two roof rack suckers for the curved hull; slot on far side for gunwale lip, protected with some sticky tape



### Getting away

Launching - easy, just floated off, now what? I am on my own, of course. Tie painter to jetty and climb in to put in dagger board, put down the rudder and pull the sail outhaul (extra long one - thanks to the advice of Roger Johnstone in Perihelion 18), yes, now what?

I have two alternatives for getting under way, stay in or get out. I had seen Laser people of great standing push their boats out while standing on the jetty and jump in as it went, but what if I missed! With nobody around I would avoid the guffaws of club members but off would go the boat into the reeds without me! No, I'll stay in if I can.

Actually, I was prepared for this one with a bit of armchair sailing. I had seen the struggles of someone untying a painter from inside a Comet, and it's a quite a stretch. So I looked up my knot book and found one called the "Highwayman's hitch", for use by highwaymen to release their horse quickly in a get-away. This is quite an easy hitch, you just pass a bight behind the bar in the middle of the painter, then pass a bight in the rope nearest the boat through that one, then pass a bight in the rope with the free end through the second bight, pulling it together until the thing doesn't fall apart.

To release it all you have to do is pull on the free end, that's the theory anyway. The hitch could not go round the jetty wood, it would certainly have jammed, so I tied a 1 metre length of thick rope as a loop around the jetty and hitched to that. This was successful, most of the time when the wind was light. Unfortunately the hitch is designed for grazing horses, and a boat straining at the painter can cause it to jam. I have tried thick rope for the painter, with little improvement, and my latest effort is to tie a nylon ring to the jetty loop (doggie chew, chocolate flavour, I don't think the flavour helps). It gets interesting when the hitch jams, because the effort to release it accelerates the boat fast toward the jetty! Then you have to untie it manually anyway. Anybody got any ideas?

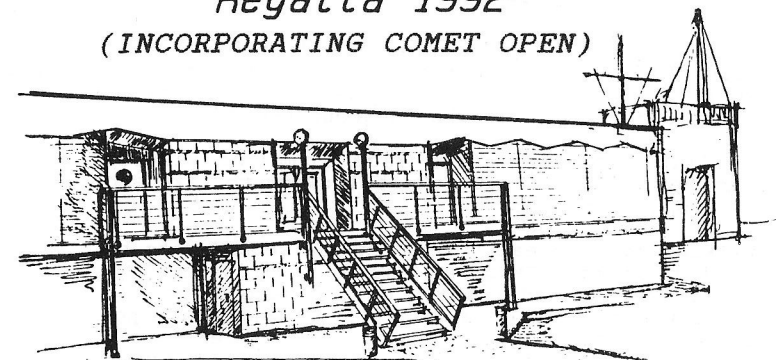
### Afloat at last

So I'm afloat, not tied to anything - bliss. But no, having chosen a light wind day, the boat moved slowly at first and was very wobbly, I had to sit in the middle or it would heel alarmingly, and what is there to sit on in the middle? Nothing. Luckily I soon found that I could sit on the inside edge of the cockpit without disastrous results, but there arose an immediate problem to learn HOW to move my weight about. I am rather used to sitting on office chairs with feet out front; OK maybe but no good for frequent crossing from one side to the other (necessary by now, opposite bank approaching, must DO something). I found one way to feel happier: ensure that one foot is at all times as near as possible underneath the body, however uncomfortable. Of course, thinking of that took some of my attention from all the other things I'd read about in the Comet handbook - but that's another story.

## Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club

### Regatta 1992

(INCORPORATING COMET OPEN)



### Programme

#### SATURDAY 4 JULY

11.00 RACING - HANDICAP A + B

FUN RACES + EVENTS

LUNCHTIME PIRATES PARADE

14.00 RACING - HANDICAP A + B

14.30 PIRATES SAIL TO DENNY ISLAND

BAR-B-QUE

'LIVE' ENTERTAINMENT

#### SUNDAY 5 JULY

11.00 RACING - HANDICAP A + B

11.15 JUNIOR START

14.00 RACING - PURSUIT RACE

17.30 PRIZE GIVING

#### COMET TO START IN B HANDICAP

FREE ENTRY TO ALL MEMBERS

VISITORS £5 FOR WEEKEND

£3 FOR ONE DAY

THIS EVENT COUNTS TOWARDS WESTERN AREA

COMET TRAVELLERS TROPHY

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND ACCOMMODATION

PHONE ERROL EDWARDS

## CRAWLEY MARINERS COMET OPEN

Near perfect conditions greeted the 24 competitors, including 10 visitors, for the Crawley mariners Y.C. Comet open meeting held on Sunday 17th May. The force 3/4 easterly wind and bright sunshine made for good close racing throughout the day.

Mark Wilkins led the first race from the windward mark, with brother Guy and Simon Hiscocks following to take second and third places respectively.

Guy Wilkins took an early lead in the second race but was closely followed by Henry Jaggers, Errol Edwards and Simon Hiscocks. Jaggers took the lead briefly on the second lap but Hiscocks and Wilkins established themselves in first and second positions midway through the race. Although the positions remained unchanged, the two were never more than a few boat lengths apart. Mark Wilkins took third from Edwards and Jaggers.

The third race was initially led by Errol Edwards followed closely by Hiscocks and Guy Wilkins. Hiscocks briefly took the lead on the third lap but a capsize dropped him back to third. Wilkins then led from Edwards with Mark Wilkins and Derek Coleman (Kingsmead S.C.) in fourth and fifth places respectively. Hiscocks regained second place by the end and almost caught Wilkins on the line.

The overall result was decided on the discard with Guy Wilkins ahead of Simon Hiscocks. The first six positions were:

- 1st Guy Wilkins, Chipstead
- 2nd Simon Hiscocks, Crawley Mariners
- 3rd Mark Wilkins, Chipstead
- 4th Errol Edwards, Chew Valley
- 5th Henry Jaggers, Kingsmead
- 6th Robin Ballam, Crawley Mariners.

Ian Beaumont

## COMET OPEN AT REDDITCH

Redditch hosted their third Comet Open on Saturday, 9th May and had a pleasing turnout, with 12 entries travelling from as far as Merthyr Tydfil, Chew Valley and Chipstead, plus a lorry load from Warwick. Unfortunately, the weather did not reward these hardy travellers and despite forecasts of strong winds, the first race started in a flat calm and very heavy rain. However, a light but variable breeze filled in and some surprisingly close racing took place.

Mark Wilkins from Chipstead got away and built up a clear lead which he held to the end. John Windibank from Chipstead chased but to no avail, closely followed by a large part of the fleet, places changing regularly. Errol Edwards from Chew Valley eventually took third place and Mark Govier from Merthyr Tydfil fourth.

The weather for the second race looked to be much improved. However, the heavens opened and the wind dropped but, yet again, filled in light and variable. Mark Wilkins showed the way with John Windibank chasing to eventually take second again. Errol Edwards held on for third place from Paul Thompson from Redditch. At last, the weather improved for the final race - virtually no rain and a strong breeze. Mark Wilkins sat this race out and consequently there was very exciting racing for the first six places and it was not until the final lap that Mark Govier took the lead to eventually win from Errol Edwards in second, John Windibank in third and Terry Whitehouse from Warwick fourth.

The first six final positions were:

- 1st Mark Wilkins, Chipstead
- 2nd John Windibank, Chipstead
- 3rd Mark Govier, Merthyr Tydfil
- 4th Errol Edwards, Chew Valley
- 5th Paul Thompson, Redditch
- 6th Terry Whitehouse, Warwick

## ANOTHER VIEW OF CRAWLEY OPEN

This was Crawley Mariners first Comet Open and only having run an Optimist Open many years ago, we were naturally nervous that things should go right. We had a meeting to discuss all the problems - there were many. Lists were made of everyone's tasks. The week before, all the tasks had been completed and we were ready just to hope for some wind - not too much - with sun preferable to rain. We were lucky, as Sunday 17th May dawned sunny but a little chilly and with a good breeze which strengthened considerably by the third race.

As we have no Club House, a member managed to arrange a scout tent for the refreshments, which was a great help; chairs and tables were borrowed from village halls, etc. The whole club seemed to be involved one way or another making cakes, on car park duty, taking money and covering the safety boats.

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, the racing was good but clean (there were no protests) and many onlookers were impressed by the 'friendly' rivalry between the Comet sailors. The racing age varied from 10 to 62 (or thereabouts). My only disappointment was to be the only lady racing; I hope more will be encouraged, from my own club as well.

We had 15 out of 19 boats from the Crawley Mariners on the water, which I think was a terrific response to support the Club - it must be some kind of record. The four who could not come missed a great day!

Diana Thompson  
Comet Captain



# Aylesbury S.C.

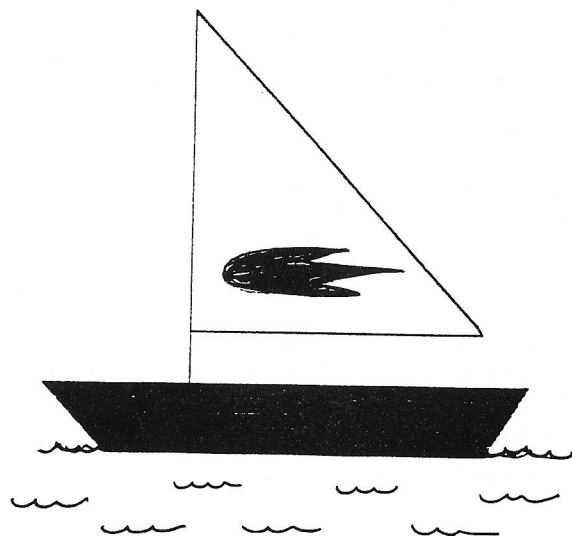
Open Meeting for Comets

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July

11.30 am Start

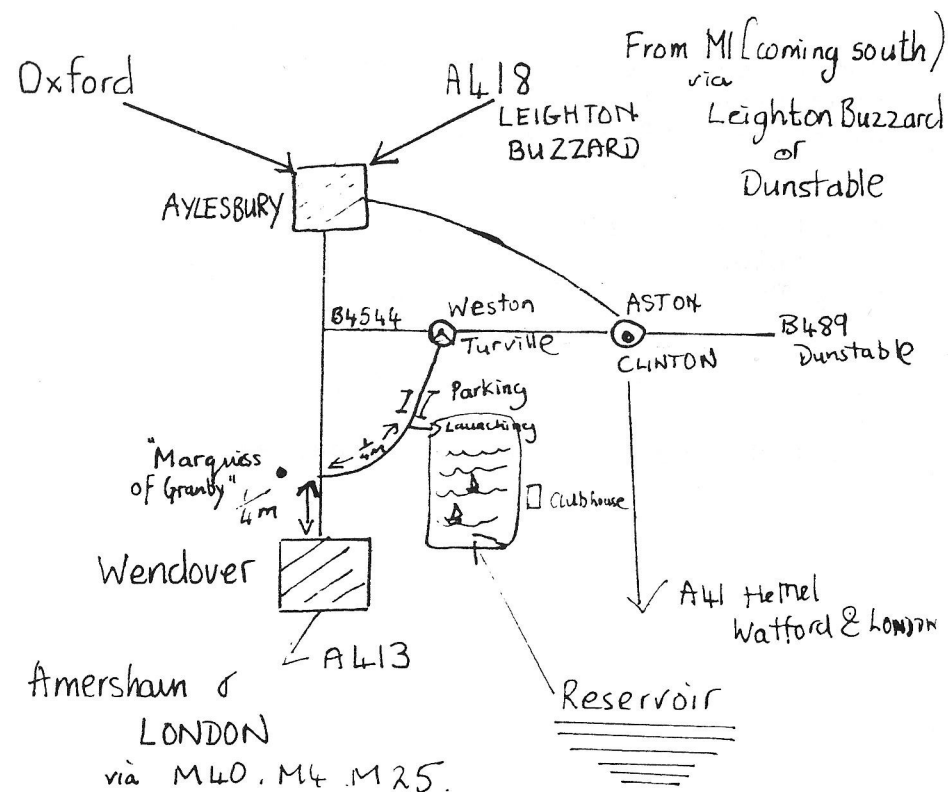
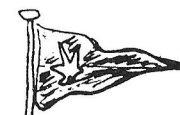
3 races.

£4.00 Entry fee includes Lunch, Tea and Prizes!



Details from Linda Brice. Tel: 02406 3530

## AYLESBURY SAILING CLUB



N O T I C E   B O A R D

FOR SALE

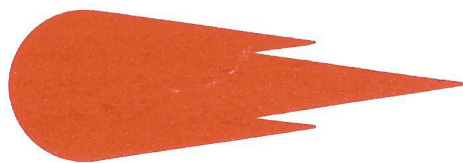
Comet 7. Cover. £600. New sail £90.  
David Matthews 0332 663891 (Derby)

Comet 243. Yellow. Trolley, cover. Good  
condition, little used £1,100.  
M. Price 0989 63460 (Ross-on-Wye)

Comet 294. Combi trailer, cover. Excellent  
condition.  
Mike Brown 0202 474889 (Christchurch)

Comet 356. Silver grey. Combi trailer,  
cover. VGC.  
Gavin Roffey 0664 63356 (Leicester)





# **Comet Class Association**

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association