



NEWSLETTER NUMBER 38 SPRING 1996

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Front cover:

Geoff Kempton and Derek Coleman at the Ardleigh Nationals, 1991

(Photo: Andrew Simmons)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sitting here in front of my computer is not a good swap for Comet sailing and it seems an awfully long time since I had a sail, with frozen lakes, bombs, bad weather and with too many business meetings conspiring to frustrate my efforts at getting afloat. The time however has not been totally wasted because with the efforts of the team, the Class stays in good shape and at this very moment the paint is metaphorically drying on the last touches of our 1996 season events.

Some of you will have seen our efforts at the exhibitions and thank you for helping, stopping by with your words of encouragement and chatting. Our racing programme is larger than ever this year with 23 events, two more than last year. We welcome 6 new venues at Warwick, Frensham, Combs, Littleton, Arden, and Mudeford. Sadly we will not be returning to the Cam, Stamford or Chew but from me personally, thanks for the memories Cam, I'm going to miss my visits.

The National Championships are early this year and located on the edge of the beautiful Peak District, so like a good Boy Scout I have prepared early and booked a cottage so that as well as enjoying the sailing, I can spend the rest of the week exploring the area. Stuart Gilder and his team have worked very hard to ensure we have a good time and they are looking forward to having us visit their club. The AGM will be on Saturday and there will be another Motion on the rules again this year, in another effort at removing what we perceive to be ambiguities and have another look at family membership.

The Tidal Championships will be at Mudeford which I am told is very safe and shallow, which sounds ideal for those of us used to sailing on inland waters. Glynn Jung and his team must have been surprised when they offered us an open event to end up with a Championship to organise but they too are pleased to have us visit.

The Activities of the Class continues to grow and spread and the committee agreed, on a trial basis, to co-opt extra help on to the committee to represent the various areas. Some areas of course are well represented already on the committee and we are now giving the matter some thought.

Pingewood SC will be holding a training day in September which the Class has endorsed. Keith Lamdin has agreed to run the day and we have been approached by several members to organise more training days. If we get a good response we will certainly organise more of these events so if you are interested you can get more information from Norah.

John Windibank Chairman (Comet 555)

EDITOR'S NOTES

New Authors

Very many thanks to our many new authors, most of whom were on my "lottery" list of members' boat numbers. With a members' response like this it is clear that Perihelion is very much alive and well!

As well as a variety of sailing articles you will find a number of articles entitled "Introducing . . .". These are to give you an impression of some of the new venues for Comet opens and championships this season.

Errors!

Thank you Paul Hinde for bringing to my notice that I put 1994/5 on the contents page, that serves me right for copying it from issue 33! I'm always careful to get the season right, but to get the year wrong - - ! Please everybody, get your snopake and black pens out and correct it for me, thanks.

Alan Browning, Editor (Comet 361)

PERIHELION

This issue of Perihelion has been deliberately delayed until early April to match the deadline for paying subscriptions. If you are reading these words, you have paid, but if not - - - - -

The next issue will be circulated in June 1996. Contributions to me by the end of May please. More contributions from the "lottery list" will be very welcome, and from any other members too!

Alan Browning, Editor

THE IKEYA SEKI STORY

I am the proud and delighted owner of Comet Cascade 673, and I write in response to your challenge in Issue 37 of Perihelion, and perhaps in some defence of the "silent majority".

My story ---

When I was in my early 20's in the late 60's I crewed in a Firefly. In those heady days of youth we sailed in all possible weathers, considering it a point of honour to do the "Frostbite" races in nothing but shorts and T shirts. We just couldn't afford wet suits so we didn't think of the cold! As I recall, capsizing was often a blessed, if brief, relief from the cold.

Years passed and my family grew. Sailing was a distant and fond memory of youth. As circumstances changed, I cast around for some suitable "male menopausal" sport that enabled me to pretend that I could still leap tall buildings with a single bound. I had always had an interest in aviation and so learned to fly. I bought a microlight aeroplane and had a number of years of superb fun and fright, making holes in the sky and, just once, in the ground! (Any landing you can walk away from is a good one).

More years passed and the time came when I could no longer maintain my flying licence. I sold my trusty plane but was by no means ready to give up the sense of exhilaration and fun I got from flying. So I decided to try my first love again. In truth sailing was my third after fast motor bikes and faster women - both are much too dangerous at my age!

Rather than leap into the expense of buying a boat and then finding that it was not for the older me, I first took a weekend "taster" sailing course. As soon as I was under way I knew that I was hooked, so I embarked on a survey of available dinghies. I wanted a single hander, but with the capability of taking my son on occasion. I tried the ubiquitous Topper and was tempted except for the fact that I just don't bend easily enough to endure more than an hour of light wind sailing with my knees under my chin. I also tried a Laser, but fell into the water so many times that the fun went out of it. Standing on the centre mainsheet during tacking may have had something to do with it!

I narrowed my choice to the Comet, Pico and a small handful of others and went to the '95 London Boat Show to complete the selection. I chose the Comet for a number of reasons, not least because of the reception I had at the stand. No high pressure, just friendly advice and a willingness to answer all of my dumb questions.

Whilst awaiting delivery, I took another sailing course, achieving the dizzy heights of RYA level 2 and joined the Tudor Sailing Club, operating in Langstone Harbour in Portsmouth. In due course I drove to Devon and picked up Comet 673, complete with all of the luxury bits and pieces.

I have always called my cars, plane, etc. by generic names --- car, plane, for creative examples. However, my wife had other ideas. She insisted that I give the Comet a proper name. I suggested Ark Royal, Bismarck, Queen Elizabeth and several similar but got a definite thumbs down. Something to do with heavenly bodies (I didn't even dare to suggest boderic) seemed to offer a sensible compromise, so I consulted my astrophysicist daughter who came up with a list. In truth, most of those comets have really awful names that you wouldn't even give to a mechanical digger. Eventually I chose IKEYA SEKI, mostly on the basis that it didn't sound too bad and was a fairly bright spark when first seen in 1966, which was one of my better years!

So why don't I take part in regular Comet competition? Well, although I want to support the Class Association, I didn't buy the boat primarily to race. I'm just neither sufficiently competent nor confident ---- yet.

Harvey Martin (Comet 673, Tudor S.C.)

STORM IN A TEACUP

I must apologise for another error in Perihelion 37 in my article about waves. At the seaside, when the sea was calm, I found that making ripples with my arm was very easy. I assumed that, because the ripples were so small, this could also be done with a spoon in a teacup. I found out too late that I was wrong! The trouble is there is so little distance in which to build up a ripple, the spoon gets to the other side of the teacup before the ripple has built up. Luckily, another way to generate ripples is by vibration and I did succeed with a dog trimmer. Without going into details, touching it on the side of the cup produced circular ripples which became established very quickly and died just as quickly when the trimmer was removed. The patterns were quite pretty, and I'm not sure I can explain everything I saw. I suggest you try it yourself, though for safety I recommend using a closed container like a plastic bottle.

Alan Browning (Comet 361)

TWO SEASONS WITH COMET 641

After reading the Editor's Notes in issue 37 of Perihelion, that he would like to hear from some of the members whose boat numbers had been listed, I thought I would write to tell you how I decided to buy the Comet and what sailing I have done in it since it was purchased.

At the beginning of 1994 I managed to persuade my parents to buy me a single-hander dinghy in which to sail. As a result we spent one Saturday looking around the Leisure Exhibition at the NEC in February, with some attention being paid to the small single-handers - the Topper and the Laser - and discovering the unknown Comet. After talking to some of the Class Association members on their stand we decided that the Comet would be the ideal boat for my weight and height, and after a discussion over a cup of tea, we paid Margaret and Barrie Hylton a visit at their stand to find out the cost of one.

The following weekend my father and I returned to order a new Comet and were told that it would be ready for collection in approximately three weeks time, the middle of March - in time for the beginning of the 1994 sailing season.

When the boat was ready, we drove down to collect it. When we arrived, Barrie asked if we were going to put it on top of our VW Campervan, but we said that the road trailer was inside! After being shown how to rig the boat, it was put on the road trailer and the spars, foils, rigging, sail and launching trolley were put in the car. The paper work was then all duly signed, money and receipts changed hands, and the owners' manual was handed over with a few helpful hints about how much sail to wind around the mast to make the reefing effective. We then left, towing the new boat, with a very nervous passenger when a sign saying "loose road chips" was seen.

On arriving home, the boat was put in the back garden, the hull was washed to remove traces of oil from the car, the rigging of the boat practised, and then packed away ready to be towed to the sailing club.

During the 1994 sailing season the Comet was only used a few times on days when the wind was light, with the sail well reefed, in order to get used to it. However it did not get as much use as I would have liked because I spent a large amount of time crewing in a National 12 to gain experience at crewing and to complete the Physical Recreation part of my Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

In February 1995 I received a phone call from Margaret Hylton asking if I would like to help on the Class Association stand at the Leisure Exhibition at the NEC. As well as meeting members of the public who were interested in the Comet, to whom I gave some of my very limited knowledge, it also gave me the opportunity of meeting other members of the Class Association.

I started the 1995 season crewing in a National 12, but part of the way through the season, after doing a race training course in the Comet and a Mirror (the latter was slightly more stable in the strong winds of one of the days), I decided to sail the Comet on Saturdays in the Novice races which had been introduced this season and the club's Youth Regatta in May 1995. But because the boat was faster than the other boats taking part, I decided to enter the 'grown-up' races. These were handicap races on Sundays and allcomers races on Thursdays. Because of the boat's handicap of 124, it was classed as a fast handicap boat, and as a result I started and finished at the back of the fleet in the handicap racing. In the one allcomers race that I attempted, I was more successful, finishing in the middle of the fleet but in front of three or four of the fleet captains of the adopted classes. This was probably due to a combination of fluke, light winds and my light weight.

Towards the end of the summer of 1995 I decided that I would like to compete in the open meeting circuit so, as a trial, I travelled to Stamford, with the boat in the VW Campervan, to compete in their open meeting. I managed to achieve a 6th in the first race, a 4th in the second and a 6th in the third. This gave me 6th position overall. Because I was competing against similar boats I noticed a few errors in my sailing technique and pick up a few tips about how to sail a bit faster, as well as having a few interesting discussions with some of the other competitors before, during and after the races. After this attempt I decided that I liked the competition and friendliness of the competitors at the open meeting - in some cases it was more friendly than at my own club.

I was again asked to help on the Class Association stand at the Leisure Exhibition, which I will try and do, timetable allowing, and will be trying to attend as many open meetings as possible during the 1996 sailing season, again this is dependent on my timetable.

Paul Hinde (Comet 641, Middle Nene SC)

LETTER FROM COMET 155

Comet 155 calling from my cold, wet and windy boat park here at the Burghfield Sailing Club, Reading, that nice lake by the side of the M4, - damn noisy when I am trying to get some peaceful rest! How nice to know that someone thinks about me and wonders what I get up to. I see one or two of you hurtling along the motorway on top or behind cars going to those open meetings or wherever; I do feel for my comrades as I know that is the time when our helms take on a different attitude, road rage and all that.

What has 155 been up to? You all know that we are only as good as the nut on the end of our tillers. The nut on the end of my tiller is starting to push on in years, as the bingo caller would say clickety click or something like that; he still loves his sailing but more at club level these days; I believe he has got damn lazy, he really has become a fair weather sailor. (I ask you, who wants to sail in weather like this, the old brass monkey would not survive!) The nut is very good to me, he tries his best, - he will never take me for a poodle around the lake, he is always trying to beat every other boat; he loves racing, he has his successes and failures, - more of the latter: in the slow handicap fleet we sail against those Lightnings, Europes, Toppers or anyone who will come and have a go. We have six more Comets in the club, nos 38, 194, 400, 401, 479 and 516. We have a bash against no 38 and 400 now and again.

The nut does not enjoy the downwind legs in high winds these days, especially when we start to rock and roll, then he will decide to give me a bath, and that is the only time I really get nasty so I then chuck him in. I do like to watch him get out, - by the time he has righted me and struggled back on, completely knackered, that's it, we generally pack up, sail back to the club house, then he puts me to bed and covers me up.

I wish that one of the other Comets was my neighbour; we could then have a good heart to heart chat about the nuts who sail us. I do have a nice little Mirror as my neighbour.

The nut says what's wrong with that geezer, he has 200 members who pay #10 each a year, - #2000, no complaints, they must enjoy being members and enjoy reading about what is happening in the Comet world; he says that he wishes that he could get #2000 and no complaints.

The nut has been to a few open meetings and a couple of National Championships in the past, but he would like to know why hold the Nationals on a bank holiday, when all the roads are clogged, the road ragers are at their best and accommodation at a high premium?

The nut now has a new problem, he has a lovely dearest; she is really nice, but they have just bought a brand new car and I do not see the dearest allowing me on top and all that gear inside. I keep telling him to tow me but I would prefer to be on a trai-

ler. At least I know he loves me and all Comets, as I hear him telling all the other would-be sailors what a great boat the Comet is, a great class association and a great lot that Comet sailors are. He also says leave us alone, we are great as we are, we do not need improving.

This is all for now, I hope the nut might take me out and about to meet some of you, I mean the Comets, - up to the nuts what they do; I would like to meet that Alan Browning.

Lots of good sailing
Comet 155 (Burghfield S.C.)

Dear Comet 155,

How lovely to hear from you! Sounds as though we have quite a lot in common - my nut is getting on a bit too. He learnt to sail in his fifties. (He and his dearest started with a Graduate, but there was rather a lot of "discussion" on the water.) I came on the scene when he retired and wanted something to sail on his own while his dearest was at work.

We started out very gently and we are still not very experienced as my nut does not care much for strong winds, but we now join in quite a few club races (usually near the back) and we have even been to a couple of Opens. Our progress is fairly sedate, but I must say he manages me much better than he used to. You mustn't complain about the baths you get every now and then - my nut actually capsizes me deliberately sometimes, just so he can practise getting back in. Did you ever hear the like?

When our dearest retired she admitted she liked the look of me and asked to try me. After several "tries", my nut got stropopy and suggested that perhaps a second Comet in the family might be a good idea so that he could have me back. The "For Sale" list in the next Perihelion was studied: there were several Comets there, but the dearest started getting difficult, and said she could not possibly sail a red Comet, or a yellow one, or a pink one.... Well really...! Fortunately there was a really nice blue one available. Now the old Graduate has gone, and I have dearest's Comet next to me in the boat park - lucky old me - it is younger and smarter than me! You could suggest to your nut that perhaps his dearest might enjoy sailing a Comet too, then you could have a new young Comet in the next berth!

There is to be an Open meeting at our club in June - how about it? I'm sure the nuts would love to meet and have a natter, and I can personally guarantee you would meet "that Alan Browning".

Comet 361 (Frensham Pond S.C.)

LOTTERY NUMBER 471

Ouch! A well directed poke in the ribs is bound to cause a reaction and I visualise many Comet sailors throughout the country stirring in their winter quarters and thinking on the same lines as myself. Alan requires a response. Maybe I'm typical of those members who happily contribute their #10 to the Association each year yet rarely take part in the open meetings and championships. One of the 74%. So why is that?

I certainly enjoy reading my copy of the Perihelion and follow the exploits of the more competitive members of the Association with interest - especially when they happen to be people I know well. I pore over those articles explaining how to set my rig for different conditions - then usually forget the most basic principles when I scream down the lake in a strong gust (I'm doing the screaming). I study intently how to avoid wave drag and 'bust my brains' trying to understand the implications of Bernoulli's theorem. Gravity waves were of particular interest to me especially the ones generated by large ships - we have Day Boats on Shearwater.

So you see I consider it worth my #10 just to receive the Newsletter and to be part of the Association. One foot dabbling in the big pool.

But why not go one step further and join the circuit? That's your point isn't it Alan? For me, and perhaps for many others, the answer is simple, I'm very happy pottering and competing at Club level.

Sitting on my sideboard in a most prominent position are 2 cups won last year sailing at Shearwater against various classes of boat. They may be the 2 most polished and prized cups in Somerset. To win them I sailed on 26 Sundays in 1995 among a friendly bunch of people. Competition was intense but always fun. The previous year there were no cups on my sideboard but the same amount of enjoyment. I know I won those cups this year because 'the cream' were often far afield taking part in opens and championships. When they returned, often victorious, loud was our praise and an increased edge developed to our sailing as we 'stay-at-homes' tried to knock them off their perches. To no avail of course, but what fun.

Sailing for me, as for many others, centres on the club and all of its activities. I'm fully aware that good sailors need to pit themselves against the best at the championships but for me I know my limitations and where I like to be. Having said which, anyone who would like to dip their feet in the "big pool" this year is invited to Shearwater on Saturday 20th April in the first of this year's open competitions. The sailing will be interesting (see Richard Smallwood's comments in Newsletter 37) and there will be a warm welcome. I shall be there somewhere towards the back of the fleet enjoying one of those rare occasions when I rub shoulders with some of the best Comet sailors.

Colin Newton (Comet 471, Commodore Shearwater S.C.)

1996 PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Send us your photos...

... for this year's Photography Competition!

Please send your recent photos covering any aspects of owning or sailing a Comet. The categories are "Racing" and "Fun", but use your imagination and these could cover anything provided there is a clear connection with Comets! There are cash prizes to be won and in addition the winners, runners-up, and we hope others, will have the satisfaction of seeing their work on display or in print.

HOW TO ENTER:

1. Entry is open to members of the Comet Class Association (CCA), their families, and friends. Members taking part in the Judging Panel will not be eligible for the prizes!
2. Each entrant may submit any number of photographs to be judged for each of the categories "**Comet Racing**" and "**Comet Fun**".
3. Photographs must have been taken between 1st September 1995 and 16th September 1996.
4. **Entries must be received on or before Monday 23rd September 1996.**
5. Entry is free!
6. Photographs should be submitted preferably as 6"x4" glossy prints (colour or b&w). Please do not mark the photos in any way but annotation by means of 'Post-It' slips is recommended and would be appreciated. Photos must be packed to ensure their receipt in good condition. Negatives or transparencies should not be sent but should be available on request. Entries remain the property of the entrant but the CCA can accept no responsibility for lost or damaged photographs. Reasonable efforts will be made to return entries that are accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope or stamped return label.
7. The CCA shall have the right to use and publish any of the entries, without fee and in whatever form it deems appropriate, in Perihelion, at exhibitions, and in any other displays or publications for the benefit of the Comet Class.

PRIZES:

1. The Judging Panel will be appointed by the CCA Chairman.
2. Each category will have a winner and a runner-up.
3. Each winner will receive £15 and each runner-up £10.
4. Names of winners and runners-up will be published in Perihelion.

ADDRESS FOR ENTRIES: All entries to be sent to:-

Henry Jagers, *Kingswood Riggs*, Moira Road,
Shellbrook, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 2TU phone 01530 563030

RESULTS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 1995

Many thanks to those of you who entered our competition. We received some very good pictures of Comets in action at various venues, but, not to detract in any way from the winners, the response was quite frankly disappointing! Where were you all? I am sure there must be very many more pictures out there somewhere. We are always hunting for new pictures to illustrate Perihelion and to use for our exhibition displays so don't be shy and let's have lots more entries this year!

The winners were:

Comet Racing - 1st Liz Hossell for her excellent shot of Phil at an interesting moment that we have all experienced at some time or another. What happened next? Did he recover?

2nd Alan Browning for his picture of Jake "Going for the high side". Another lucky shot this one. I know our builder does not like to see too many like this - bad publicity for potential newcomers to the sport - but keep them coming, we love them!

Comet Fun - 1st Mavis Fromour. A simple but evocative shot of our chairman preparing his boat on a balmy day in early spring.

We did not award the second prize in this category due to insufficient entries.

I hope the winners, and others, will have seen their photos used as part of our display at both the recent Birmingham and Alexandra Palace shows. We were able to make first-rate enlargements direct from the prints.

Henry Jagers.



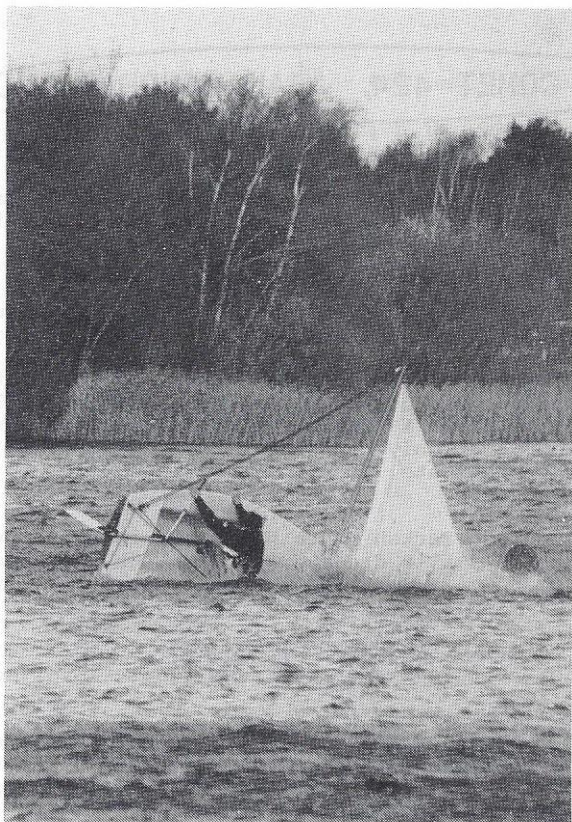


Photo Competition - Comet Racing 2nd prize

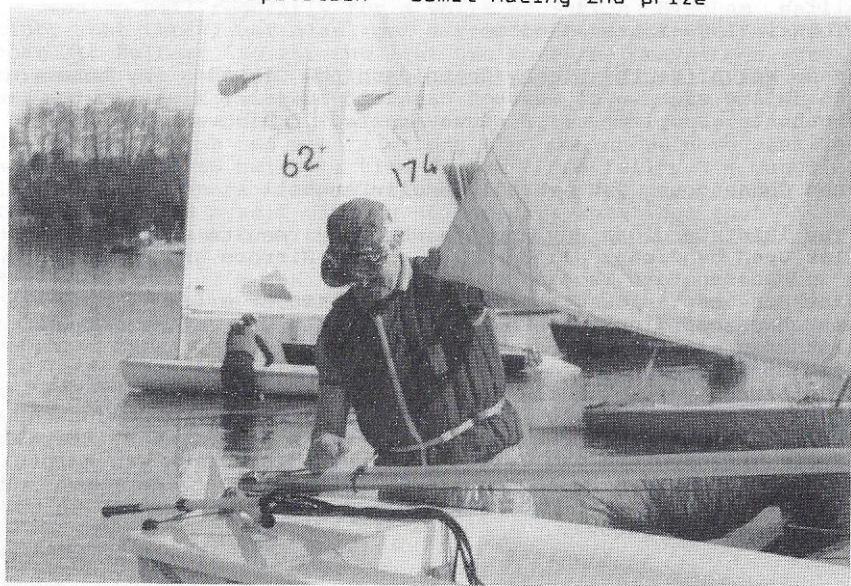


Photo Competition - Comet Fun 1st prize

COMET 424, "SALAMANDRA"

(Editor's explanatory note: Comet 424 was in the "lottery" list, members I referred to as "not writing articles for Perihelion or regularly attending open meetings or championships". But Comet 424 was a traveller)

Alan, you've got it all wrong or failed to check carefully before going to press. I'll try and help put the record straight.

Preamble: I Started sailing in 1968 first in a Heron, then in an Enterprise and an International Moth. I had wins at all levels, except in the Moth. In 1979 I purchased an 8 metre Morgan Giles "Tess of Teign", but only cruised in that. I obtained my Yacht Master theory certificate. Tess was sold in 1990.

Comet sailing

In 1987 I moved from Berkshire to Wales and in 1993 bought Comet 424, learning to sail a dinghy again! On the first day at my club, Clywedog S.C., I won the first two races, I couldn't believe it! But I didn't win again for months (could not cope with high winds).

In 1994 I took part in 5 open meetings, which involved quite a bit of travelling:

Merthyr Tydfil:	4th overall (travelling 70 miles each way)
Slough:	12th overall (200 miles each way)
Bala Lake:	14th overall (70 miles each way) (Handicap open)
Chase:	9th overall (129 miles each way)
Pingewood:	15th overall (200 miles each way)

Then in 1995 I travelled to

the Welsh (North) Dinghy Championships, Clywedog (my home club, 45 miles each way!) where I came 6th overall. Mine was the only boat to complete all 5 races (reefed), which earned me a #10 prize,

the Chase open: 9th overall, and in August

The 121st Cardigan Bay Regatta where my results were:

1st Open handicap, all dinghies except Mirrors and Toppers (which had separate races)
1st Handicap, slow dinghies (handicap 120 or over)
1st Handicap dinghies other than GP14, Laser, Mirror, Topper)
1st Open single handers
1st Open Handicap Race for all dinghies (including Cats)
and I now hold, for one year, the Captains Memorial Trophy, the Ridell Silver Cup, the Daily Mirror Cup, the Ocean Height Cup and the Garfield Williams Arymor Bell (with prize money totalling #71). This regatta was sailed in light airs, which was helpful to me at 67 years old. There were seven races over the three days, in both of the first two races I finished 6th. The results of the rest are given above.

Motto: win if you can, but whatever the result enjoy the sailing.
May I look forward to Comet competition in 1996.

Best wishes,

Ralph Smith (Comet 424, "Salamandra")

P.S. Thanks for a good magazine and full marks for your good intentions.

Editor's apology: I did pore over the recent results to try to check that the boats I listed were not regulars at open meetings, but must have missed you Ralph because the results are sent to me classified in areas, and your open meetings were spread over three Aphelion areas. Sorry about that, you certainly have put the record straight and are a credit to the Association in many ways, not least in travelling so far to take part in open events.

GOODBYE COMET 493

Unfortunately, the time has come to hang up my wetsuit and sell my Comet. I have to say that I have thoroughly enjoyed sailing "Ultraviolet" (named due to her colour) because she is so easy to handle - after my disastrous attempts with the Laser!

I used to sail regularly for a while at Sutton Bingham sailing Club, but then I met Alan, got married and moved myself and my boat to Belfast. So for the last two summers I have been trying to master sea sailing. Well, the Comet is certainly lively on the sea - she is so much lighter (to do with the salty water I'm told!) and more sensitive to everything - wind, water and me! Surfing in a high sea with a strong wind behind me gave me a few scares (and a few swims) a time or two I can tell you - especially at the gybe mark with only the Irish Sea between me and Scotland! I found myself sitting so far back sometimes that I was nearly hiking out over the transom! But I think it was fun!

Now, this week, I'm taking her back to England and putting her up for sale - there are more of you Comet fans that side of the Irish Sea than on this side. I have been racing with Lasers and Toppers these last two seasons and I either got left behind by the Lasers or I left the Toppers behind - leaving me with no-one to sail against! sniff.....! But there is no doubt, I will get another Comet one day - perhaps when the Irish discover what they have been missing and there are a few more over here.

So, happy sailing to you all and - anyone want to buy a Comet - well travelled and much loved ?!

Ruth Kerr (Comet 493, just!)

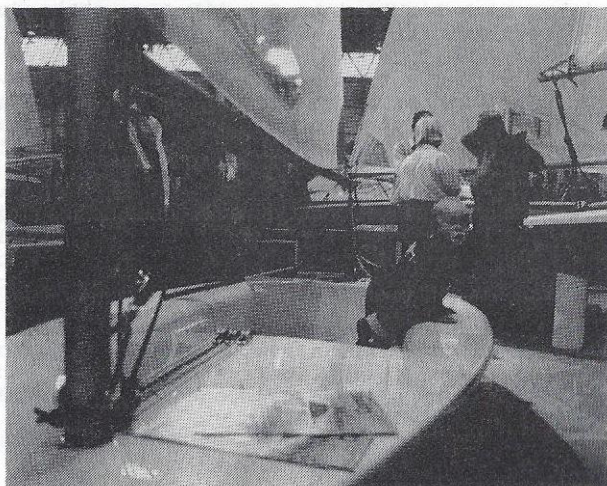
At the London Boat Show



A shower of Comets

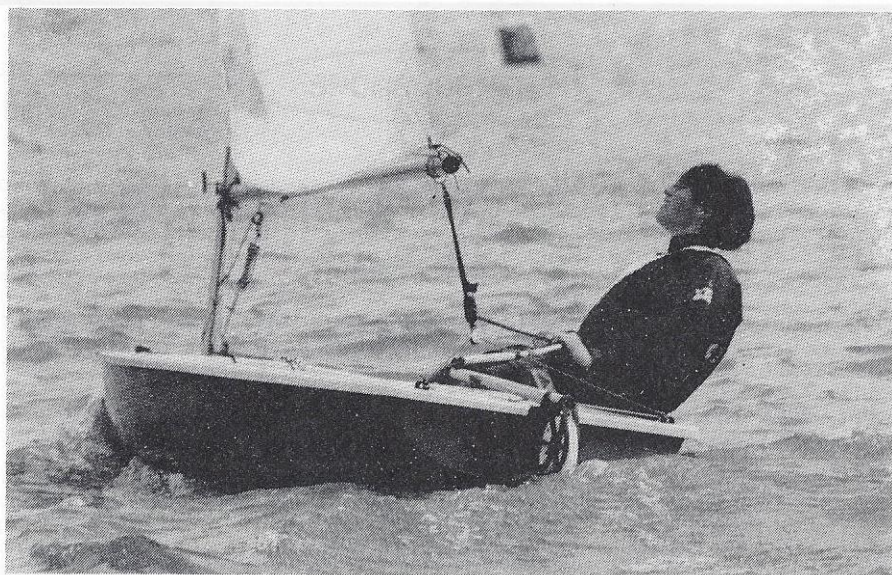
Andrew Simmons in pensive mood

At the NEC Birmingham Leisure Show



Starting young!

(Photo: David Gilder)



Jake Sutton, who did so well in 1995

(Photos: Anne Browning)

SPONSORSHIP?

Over the past few years, attendances at open meetings have fallen and the number of qualifiers for the Regional Aphelion Trophies and the National Orbital Trophy have been disappointing. Many discussions have taken place as to why this is and to what can be done to increase open meeting attendance.

I personally feel that there should be an incentive to travel and to do well at open meetings. In the past season, prizes given by clubs to the winners have varied from some very nice glassware to sizable gift vouchers. It is a pity that the prizes given to the winners and qualifiers of the Aphelion and the Orbital have not reflected the time, effort and achievement to those qualifiers.

I do not intend to belittle those prizes nor do I intend to label those on the Committee as being mean with allocating monies for prizes, but i do feel that there is a need for sponsorship from companies other than Comet Dinghies and Dinghy Leisure, to the tune of some prizes which reflect the effort involved in attending open meetings.

Wouldn't it be nice if the winner of the Orbital Trophy were to be presented with a new boat in exchange for the winning boat, and the winners of the Aphelions each receiving a new sail.

I wonder if there are any Comet sailors out there who are in a position to help obtain some sponsorship monies from either their own business, or from their employers. I'm not sure that the Class Committee would be pleased to receive any offers of sponsorship. New boats and sails may be an over optimistic dream, but any prizes funded by sponsorship I'm sure will go a long way to help increase open meeting and championship attendance, and in the long run, improve the standard of sailing within the class.

So if there is anybody who is in a position to help, please contact a member of the Committee.

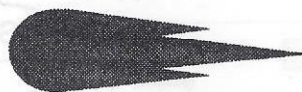
Anon (Comet Association Member)

Editor's note: I follow the precedent of the previous editor in being willing to print anonymous letters, provided that they are not anonymous to me, after all contributors of such letters must be Comet Association members. Personally I am not in favour of sponsorship in this way but that is irrelevant. What matters is that any member's views can be publicised through Perihelion, particularly to the Committee, and possibly for discussion at the AGM too.

COMET CLASS

OPEN MEETINGS

1996



Meetings in Italics are Provisional

<u>Date</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
20. 4.96	Shearwater Sailing Club.....	WEST	Nic Cross	01373 822258
27. 4.96	Fishers Green Sailing Club.....	EAST	Steve Conroy	01992 713455
28. 4.96	Warwick Sailing Club.....	NORTH	Terry Whitehouse	01926 494822
4. 5.96	Sutton Bingham Sailing Club...	WEST	Gordon Parker	01458 223058
12. 5.96	Crawley Mariners Sailing Club	EAST	Diana Thompson	01737 552482
18. 5.96	Merthyr Tydfil Sailing Club....	WEST	Mark Govier	01222 778459
25. 5.96	Redditch Sailing Club.....	NORTH	Paul Thompson	01527 63543

25.5.96

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

26.5.96

27.5.96

GLOSSOP SAILING CLUB

Stuart Gilder

01457 861452

2. 6.96	.....	.....	.....	.....
8. 6.96	Chipstead Sailing Club.....	EAST	Emer Power	01813 091798
15. 6.96	ICI Slough Sailing Club.....	SOUTH	Mark Taylor	01628 602663
22. 6.96	Chester Sailing & Canoeing Club	NORTH	John Edwards	01829 781234
29. 6.96	Frensham Pond Sailing Club	SOUTH	Geoff Sutton	01420 475918
7. 7.96	Chase Sailing Club.....	NORTH	Nigel Ford	01216 822903
13. 7.96	Cotswold Sailing Club.....	WEST	David Bevan	01285 653918
20. 7.96	Combs Sailing Club.....	NORTH	David Hughs	01614 277280
21. 7.96	Aylesbury Sailing Club.....	SOUTH	Christine Stack	01442 873557
28. 7.96	.....	.....	.....	.....
4. 8.96	Seafarers Sailing Club.....	SOUTH	John Glover	01329 665408
11. 8.96	.....	.....	.....	.....

17. 8.96

TIDAL CHAMPIONSHIP

18. 8.96

MUDEFORD SAILING CLUB

Glyn Jung

01202 488508

25. 8.96	.....	.....	.....	.....
7. 9.96	Littleton Sailing Club.....	EAST	Martin Vinson	01483 38149
15. 9.96	Arden Sailing Club.....	WEST	Harold Bayliss	01527 873845
22. 9.96	.....	.....	.....	.....
29. 9.96	Pingewood Sailing Club.....	SOUTH	John Vail	01734 812174
5.10.96	Redsmere Sailing Club.....	NORTH	Steve Heyes	01625 583290
13.10.96	Kingsmead Sailing Club.....	EAST	Len Dean	01344 772217

Orbital Trophy

Qualification for the Orbital Trophy will require attendance at :-

1. One Championship.
2. Meetings in at least two of the four areas.
3. Six events to count.
4. Ties will be decided on the results at the National or Inland Championships.

Aphelion Trophies

Four Area Trophy events will be held this year.

Qualification requires attendance at 3 events within an area.

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

APHELION TROPHIES 96

WESTERN AREA

Shearwater Sailing Club
Sutton Bingham Sailing Club
Merthyr Tydfil Sailing Club
Cotswold Sailing Club
Arden Sailing Club

Three events are needed to qualify and the best three results from the five available, will count. Ties will be decided by discards or the last head to head result.

Prizes will be presented at Arden S.C. on 15th September and will be awarded to all Qualifiers.

EASTERN AREA

Fishers Green Sailing Club
Crawley Mariners Sailing Club
Chipstead Sailing Club
Littleton Sailing Club
Kingsmead Sailing Club

Three events are needed to qualify and the best three results from the five available, will count. Ties will be decided by discards or the last head to head result.

Prizes will be presented at Kingsmead S.C. on 13th October and will be awarded to all Qualifiers.

NORTHERN AREA

Warwick Sailing Club
Redditch Sailing Club
Chester Sailing Club
Chase Sailing Club
Combs Sailing Club
Redsmere Sailing Club

Three events are needed to qualify and the best three results from the Six available, will count. Ties will be decided by discards or the last head to head result. (The Chairman of the Comet Class will have power to decide contested results.) Prizes will be presented at Redsmere S.C. on 5th October and will be awarded to all Qualifiers.

SOUTHERN AREA

ICI Slough Sailing Club
Frensham Pond Sailing Club
Aylesbury Sailing Club
Seafarers Sailing Club
Pingewood Sailing Club

Three events are needed to qualify and the best three results from the five available, will count. Ties will be decided by discards or the last head to head result.

Prizes will be presented at Pingewood S.C. on 29th September and will be awarded to all Qualifiers.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

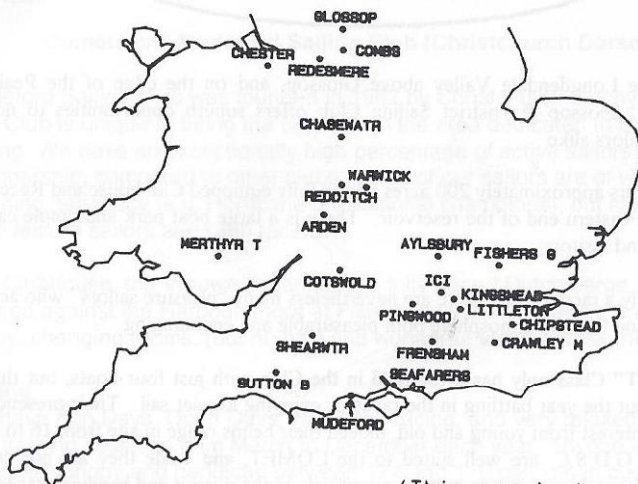
APRIL - JUNE 1996

Saturday	20th April	Shearwater open
Saturday	27th April	Fishers Green open
Sunday	28th April	Warwick open
Saturday	4th May	Sutton Bingham open
Monday	6th May	Kennet Valley open day (see page 29)
Sunday	12th May	Crawley Mariners open
Saturday	18th May	Merthyr Tydfil open
Saturday	25th May	Redditch open
Saturday	25th May	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
Sunday	26th May	(Glossop Sailing Club)
Monday	27th May	" "
Saturday	8th June	Chipstead open
Saturday	15th June	ICI Slough open
Saturday	22nd June	Chester open
Saturday	29th June	Frensham Pond open

For your diary:

Sat 6th July	Filey Regatta (see page 31)
28th July - 4th August	Mudeford week
Sat/Sun 17-18th August	TIDAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, Mudeford
Saturday 29th September	Training day, Pingewood
Saturday 12th October	Comet Demo day, Kingsmead

OPEN MEETING LOCATIONS



(This map is to scale)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1996

NOTICE OF AGM 1996

The Annual General Meeting of the Comet Class Association will take place on Saturday 25th May 1996 at Glossop Sailing Club.

Items for inclusion on the agenda should reach the Secretary no later than 1st May 1996

The AGM is YOUR meeting, YOUR opportunity to say how you think things should be done. Don't leave it all to someone else - speak for yourself!

Norah Gould
32 The Dell
Kingsclere
Nr Newbury
Berks, RG20 5NL

Tel: 01635 298074

INTRODUCING . . . GLOSSOP S.C.

Situated in the Longdendale Valley above Glossop, and on the edge of the Peak District National Park, Glossop & District Sailing Club offers superb opportunities to novice and experienced sailors alike.

The water covers approximately 200 acres with a fully equipped Clubhouse and Race Control situated at the eastern end of the reservoir. There is a large boat park and ample car parking for members and visitors.

Whilst primarily a racing Club, there are nevertheless many "pleasure sailors" who actively use the facilities, and find the atmosphere both pleasurable and encouraging.

The "COMET" Class only has a toe-hold in the Club with just four boats, but they can be seen throughout the year battling in the races or enjoying a quiet sail. Their presence attracts considerable interest from young and old, indeed their helms range in age from 16 to 60-ish! Conditions at G.D.S.C. are well suited to the COMET, and while they are not catered for separately in the racing, they compete competitively in the pursuit and handicap races.

1995 saw the Club host its first COMET OPEN and we were delighted when the Association approached us to host the 1996 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS.

For those of you in the south of the Country, it is a long way to travel, but not only will you be seeing some lovely scenery, you will also be giving the COMET some much needed advertising in the northern region.

There are camping/caravan sites close to the Club together with several Hotels and B & B Establishments in the Glossop area. Lists of these are available on request. It is possible that anyone using a Motorhome may be able to use the Club premises as a base, but permission must be sought in advance.

Planning is now well under way for the weekend of 25 - 27th May 1996 when Glossop and District Sailing Club look forward to meeting the extended COMET family.

Stuart Gilder. (Comet 585) Tel / Fax: 01457 861452

Glossop and District Sailing Club.
Torside Reservoir,
Old Woodhead Road,
Hadfield,
Derbyshire.
Tel : 01457 854054

Ordnance Survey Map Sheet 110. Reference 068984



INTRODUCING . . . MUDEFORD S.C.

Comets and Mudeford Sailing Club (Christchurch Dorset)

Mudeford Sailing Club was founded in 1962 by Christchurch dinghy sailors. The Club is unique in being the only one in the area dedicated to Harbour sailing. We have an exceptionally high percentage of active sailors in our membership, compared to other clubs. Some of our sailors are of very high standing nationally (e.g. Hurricane 5.9 National champions), but most are just keen leisure sailors and Club racers.

Our Clubhouse, the Vrouwe Johanna, is a fully rigged Dutch barge. She is moored against the Harbour shore at Fisherman's Bank, Stanpit, providing a galley, changing rooms, (but no bar) and wonderful views across the Harbour.

Sailing

We have Fun Days, Open Days, Handicap racing, and very relaxed practice and training sessions from March to December each year. Anyone with a monohull dinghy and handicap between 174 and 110 can join in our sailing events. The **Comet** is a new class to the Club, we currently have three boats racing and at least three members seeking second-hand boats. We expect to have a full fleet of Comets by the time the **Tidal Championships** are held at Mudeford **17th/18th August 1996**. Other classes very active at Mudeford include a high-quality Laser fleet, (we are on the Laser Travelers circuit), Gulls, Herons, Solos, Europes, Cadets, Toppers and Optimists.

Christchurch Harbour is shallow and very safe. Our Clubhouse is situated at the very safest and most scenic point in the Harbour, overlooking Stanpit Marsh Nature Reserve.

For youngsters and adult beginners we have two club boats (a Topper and an Optimist) and a loan scheme of members boats for adults. We are situated next to Strides Boatyard and Sailing School, which provides excellent foundation training so that you can build confidence. It rarely takes more than a couple of lessons before people are ready to "fly solo"

Membership is simple and affordable. We have membership for Adults, Juniors, Couples and Families.

Give us a call - find out how easy it is to be sailing on one of the most scenic spots on the South Coast.

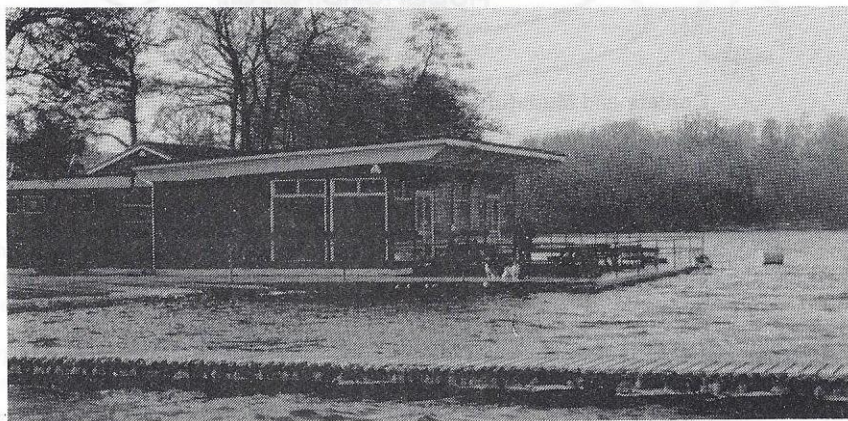
Call :-

Glynn Jung - Commodore 01202 488508

Doreen Hewitt - Membership Secretary 01202 475776

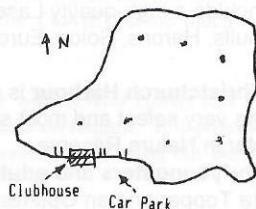
John Challener - Sailing Secretary 01202 488581

INTRODUCING . . . FRENSHAM POND S.C.



Frensham Pond is artificial; it was created in the Middle Ages by damming a stream at what is now the west end of the Pond. The resultant lake was stocked with fish for local monasteries. Paintings from the 18th century show boats sailing on the Pond, and in the period between the world wars sailing boats were hired out by the local hotel.

In 1953, Frensham Pond Sailing Club was formed. The Club occupies an area of 3 acres leased from the local council and the surrounding land is administered as a Country Park. The Club has large car and boat parks, 6 jetties and a comfortable club house with bar and kitchen. The main club house was opened in April 1965, (replacing 2 corrugated iron sheds) and new changing rooms and showers added in 1989. The Club has always been primarily a racing club and many members have been winners of National and World events. Members have also represented Great Britain in the Olympic Games and taken part in major yachting events such as the Whitbread and Fastnet races.



The Comet fleet at Frensham has increased over the past 5 years from 1 to 7, and the Comet is well regarded: Geoff Sutton (Comet 472) is currently the Handicap Class Captain and Steve Hill (Comet 530) is the Club Vice Commodore. Both Geoff and Steve are to be seen sailing their Comets virtually every weekend.

We are lucky to have a club in such an attractive location - come and sample our hospitality at the Open meeting on 29th June - a new event in the Comet calendar. We do not have any islands, but the lake is surrounded on 3 sides by trees which do make for "interesting" wind shifts! We look forward to welcoming you.

INTRODUCING . . . WARWICK S.C.

Warwick Sailing Club is a small family sailing club who sail on the River Avon at Warwick. We may not have the best water in the Country for sailing on, but being situated only a quarter of a mile from Warwick Castle makes it an ideal day out for visitor's families.

We sail British Moths, Mirrors, Toppers, Lasers, Comets and a variety of other boats. We have a fleet of 7 Comets and regularly turn out 5 of them and the Comet has more or less eclipsed the British Moths in the club.

Is there enough water to sail? Well, yes and no. Clearly we lack the large open areas of other waters, and the width of the river offers frequent tacking when beating up or down stream. The current, and the action of bankside obstructions, provide further interest.

The site provides a beautiful setting for barbecues. The club is too small to run a bar, and we feel that there are many advantages in not doing so, however tea and coffee are always available when racing. Social events, on the other hand, are rarely 'dry'.

The Club Secretary is Alan Gandy, telephone 01926 421561

Editor's note: I have concocted this brief introduction to Warwick S.C. because it is a new venue for Comets. The wording has been taken, word-for-word, from the Warwick Sailing Club handout and a letter from Terry Whitehouse. (I must admit to being rather attracted by the idea of tea and coffee always available when racing!)

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

Well, a few of you replied and on the whole it would appear that you would wish us to stay as we are.

Some of the comments were:- Outsiders, when you mention 'dinghy', think of rubber dinghies. Another view was like 'The Graduate Owners Association', as was to incorporate all Mr Simmons boats into one association.

So I will be advising the Committee accordingly.

Thank you to those who took the trouble to put pen to paper.

I shall have a listening ear at some of the open meetings so if you have more to add speak up.

Derek Coleman, Treasurer (Comet 303)

THE NATIONALS (A VIEW FROM THE BACK)

In 1994, I competed in my first Comet Nationals in an elderly boat with, I think, its original sail. Needless to say, the strong(ish) winds, blown out sails and my light weight resulted in 25th place. I very soon obtained a new sail!

In 1995, armed with hotel reservations, by courtesy of Alex Reeve, I arrived at Sheerness with my wife Linda, who had decided to spend a few days on the Kent coast whilst I "played boats". I shall not describe the hotel other than to say that it had all the facilities you would associate with a hotel but a staff who appeared to have never stayed in a hotel and therefore had no idea what a guest might want!

As a gravel pit sailor my experience of sea sailing is limited but a week before I decided to make a trip to Seafarers open at Havant for some practise. The conditions suited me perfectly and I came away the (slightly lucky) winner. Buoyed with this success I was all set for a brilliant performance at Sheerness.

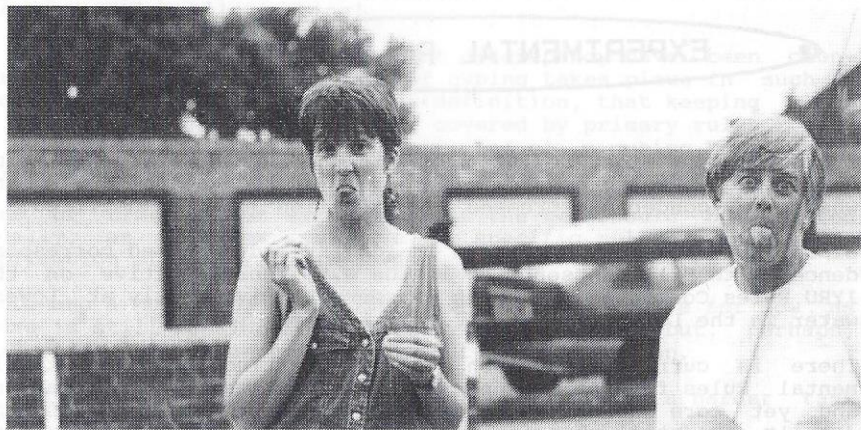
Well..... the practice day came and the wind blew. I rigged. I took the boat down to the beach and chickened out! However, Linda and Alex's wife Michelle had a wonderful day at Sissinghurst, the home of Rita Sackville West. The dinner in the pub with Alex and Michelle was a very enjoyable occasion and I began to look forward to the first real race.

Saturday dawned and the wind had abated. Here was my chance to prove that the win at Seafarers was not a fluke.....disaster..... but never mind, the second race was coming soon.

The second race arrived with a very difficult line to cross on starboard but not to worry: "I'm at the windward end of the line and have clear air to tack on to port". This was wonderful and at this point I would like to quote something that was said by a supporter on the shore "I think he's in the lead.....Yes....he is in the lead". I can confirm that at about 5 minutes after the start, I would have also placed myself in the lead. However, all you seasailors will know that taking the shortest route in deep water against a 4 knot tide is not the quickest route to the first mark. That was the story of the race, first after 5 minutes and second from last at the first mark.

Following an evening of self pity amongst other competitors, some of whom had similar tales of woe, I awoke on Sunday to find the gales returned. This is where my body decided that I should not be forced to undergo more humiliation on the water by providing me with a really stinking head cold. Wrapped from head to toe, I watched in amazement as both young and old coped with the severe conditions and I would like to congratulate them. The final results still confuse me as I still managed to get a higher finish than the year before.

I am looking forward to the '96 championships which will be held inland but would like to leave you with Linda's and Michelle's Opinion of my efforts at Sheerness:



Brian Welham (Comet 160, ICI Slough)

IN BRIEF

CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN

If you recall, I reported, in Perihelion 36, of the election of Glynn Jung (Comet 554) as Commodore of Mudeford Sailing Club (where I sail as a guest in the summer months).

Well, Comet sailors are at it again, and this time I would like to offer my congratulations to Roy Brumpton (Comet 579) on his recent elevation to Commodore of Kennet Valley Sailing Club, my home club.

And with my committee hat on, I should like to tell you all of an open day at Kennet Valley S.C. on Bank Holiday Monday, 6th May 1996, where you can view our facilities, enjoy a BBQ, and have a sail - in a Come - what else!

Everybody is welcome, we are a family oriented club, with members spanning all age groups. For further information please contact Ann Hooper (01734 701452) or Roy Brumpton (01734 411858)

Ann Hooper (Comet 43)

BOAT NAMES

A firm 'Wet & Wild' now specialises in vinyl graphic logos generally dedicated to the sailing world. They believe that normal vinyl signwriters shy away from boat and sail names because they do not have experience of the conditions that their work will be under. For a brochure call Greg Hall on 01252 873577 (Yateley, Hants)

EXPERIMENTAL RULES UPDATE

I thought you might be interested in the current state of play concerning the proposed simplification of the Racing Rules and whether my concerns expressed in Perihelion 35 were justified.

Since last summer, I have been in lengthy and detailed correspondence with Bill Bentsen, who is the U.S. representative on the IYRU Rules Committee, although he seems to live mostly at Loweswater in the Lake District.

There is currently not much point in printing the '96 Experimental Rules for you as there have already been two iterations and yet more changes are under consideration. However, if the details are still changing, there are some general conclusions which might be drawn and some principles which appear fairly well established.

Firstly, my main concern that there was a hidden agenda to change our style of racing appears to be incorrect. I think that, in an attempt to simplify the rules, the 1995 Experimental draft simply omitted a number of detailed elements of the current rules without necessarily considering the effect and certainly not as part of an intrinsic plan to change our sport. The view was that many of the seldom used elements could be best covered by strict and wide interpretation of the, largely safety oriented, primary rules.

This might, indeed, have worked but it places an enormous burden of interpretation on protest committees and, in the 1996 Experimental draft, a number of current elements of the rules have been re-introduced which resolves most of my concerns at the expense of added complexity. This should not surprise anyone as the current rules have evolved over many years and it was always going to be difficult to simplify them without loss of clarity in complex situations on the race course.

Secondly, in terms of principles, it is established that luffing to protect your wind remains an integral part of racing and also that onus of proof in respect of overlaps at marks has been added for the benefit of protest committees in resolving disputes.

Within the details of luffing, the sudden luff is controlled by a primary duty to allow the other boat time and room to keep clear, which it must do promptly. The question of whether an action is too sudden or not prompt enough will exercise the protest minded! Curiously, in luffing, the controls exercised by a mast line or mast abeam have been removed in favour of the old unlimited luff head to wind except for an overlap established close by to leeward from astern. As I am not convinced this is good practise but I accept the difficulties of policing mast abeam or line are significant.

Another area of concern is the contention that a boat, whilst tacking, shall keep clear of other boats but that this principle does not apply whilst gybing!

My arguments against this apparent discrepancy have been countered with a view that the act of gybing takes place in such a short period of time, by current definition, that keeping clear is unnecessary and any issues are covered by primary rules 2 and 3. My view is that keeping clear in, and of, a gybing boat, which may involve handling spinnakers and gybing as well, is at least as difficult as keeping clear in, and of, a tacking boat, regardless of time. Either way, I suggest the two should be treated equally, as they currently are, by specific rule or solely by application of the primary rules.

There are a number of other issues which I will leave for now as there is still considerable fluidity in the drafts but, perhaps, this will give you an update on the current position.

In truth, not so much a hidden agenda but, rather, a harder task than first anticipated!

Keith Lamdin (Comets 55 & 241, Aylesbury SC)

FILEY ANNUAL REGATTA

The dates for the Filey Annual Regatta are Saturday and Sunday 5th and 6th July 1996.

Any class with six boats is accorded fleet status and given a separate start. As only three races out of five are required to qualify, those who are unable to attend for both days can qualify on the Sunday only. Should your class prefer a Saturday only event, we would be happy to organise an extra race on this day by prior arrangement. The first race on Saturday will be at 1200 hrs, racing starts on Sunday at 1030 hrs.

Filey has a well protected bay for sailors and an excellent beach for the family. All are welcome at the social event on the Saturday evening.

Peter Crooks, Commodore Filey S.C.

Editor's note: July 7th clashes with the Chase open meeting, but Saturday 6th July could be a ready-made event for our most Northerly Comets.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1995 MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, HELD AT SHEPPEY YACHT CLUB
ON SATURDAY, 26th AUGUST 1995

The meeting was attended by Andrew Simmons, members of the committee and 21 members of the Association.

The Comet Class Association was welcomed to Sheppey Y.C by Tim Bell who is in charge of sail training at the club.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Keith Lamdin, Fiona Cauter, Henry Jagers, Margaret Hall, Guy Wilkins, Nancy Gould

2. Minutes of the 1994 AGM at Queen Mary SC

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were agreed and signed. Proposed by Derek Coleman, Seconded by Robin Ballam

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked Sheppey Y.C. for hosting the championships and making facilities available for the AGM. He noted that the championships were at the mercy of the wind and tide.

The Comet Class Association had again experienced a full year, with the following highlights:

a] Exhibition at the NEC. Margaret Hylton had recruited 45 helpers over the week. The local clubs were encouraged to advertise by producing a publicity leaflet which was handed out on the stand.

b] Sailboat 95 at Alexandra Palace. The Association shared a stand with the Duo and Trio which made a large area. There were huge numbers of visitors to the stand. The chairman thanked those who helped, particularly Diana Thompson who loaned her boat.

c] Silver Salver at Draycote. Jake Sutton did very well to finish in 67th place in very poor conditions when most of the fleet failed to complete the race.

d] Freezer at Sheppey. The three Comet representatives - Guy Wilkins, Jake Sutton and John Windibank - were never in contention, again in poor sailing conditions.

- e] Results for the year:
 Championships - Guy Wilkins narrowly beat Alex Reeve
 Association - Mark Wilkins won for the third time
 Orbital - Mark Wilkins
 Eastern Aphelion - Mark Wilkins
 Western Aphelion - Mark Wilkins
 Northern Aphelion - Richard Smallwood
 Southern Aphelion - Jake Sutton

f] Open Meetings. There was one problem which affected the results for the Orbital, when Cotswold lost their results. The chairman asked if those who had attended that Open could contact him with their placing. There had been 21 meetings at a variety of venues. There had been problems over the tidal events and some Opens, particularly Cam, Merthyr Tydfil, Chew Valley and Seafarers, had been poorly attended. Where there were low numbers, organisers become dispirited.

g] Photographic Competition. This has been organised to enable a wider range of members of the Association and their families to become more involved in Class activities.

The chairman concluded by thanking the committee members for their work during the year, and Andrew Simmons for making it all possible.

5. Secretary's Report

a] The secretary reported that comments on the problems experienced at the 1994 Nationals had been made to Queen Mary S.C., but no reply had been forthcoming.

b] There had been some problems in finding a venue for the 1995 Nationals after Weston S.C. had announced their pricing policy of £50 per boat. Sheppey had offered a good deal and the event was running smoothly.

c] Sutton Bingham S.C had hosted an enjoyable, if windy, Championship which had been won by Alex Reeve. Jake Sutton and David Forsdike were second and third.

d] The possible venues for the 1996 Nationals are Staunton Harold and Glossop, with Seafarers and Mudeford as contenders for the Tidal.

e] Attendance at Open meetings is generally down, a trend seen in other classes. The committee had discussed alternative scoring methods, such the Grand Prix system, but it was felt that smaller meetings would be penalised.

f] There was a steady stream of enquiries about the class and the dinghy.

g] Warwick S.C has indicated that it would like to host an Open in 1996.

h] There was some discussion over the format for the Nationals, with the meeting agreeing a preference for the current arrangement of 3 days over a weekend.

6. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the accounts is filed with these minutes. (circulated to members in Perihelion 37)

The Treasurer explained that it was not possible for an organisation to put money into a 30 day account.

The accounts were adopted, proposed by Alan Browning, seconded by Errol Edwards

7. Newsletter Editor's Report

The Editor reminded members that they should ask him for any photographs sent for the magazine which they wanted returned. He asked for reports on Open meetings and indicated that he has a guide for compiling such reports.

8. Consideration of Motions

There was considerable discussion of the motions. It was explained that the first two were an attempt to standardise the situation where people do not pay until late, and then want the benefits e.g. back copies of Perihelion. The third motion was to facilitate matters for the Treasurer, especially with regard to cash flow, and the due date for membership fees.

The motions were proposed by Derek Coleman and seconded by John Windibank.

Motion 1 - That the Comet Class Association adopt a joining fee of £2. - **dismissed**

Motion 2 - That in accordance with Rule 8c, members who allow their membership to lapse will be required to pay a further joining fee on rejoining the Class Association - **dismissed**

Motion 3 - That the Class Association accounts year will run from January 1st to December 31st - **agreed**

The meeting agreed that an administrative charge should be made for back issues of Perihelion.

9. Election of Officers:

The Committee was prepared to stand again and were reelected en bloc.

Chairman	John Windibank
Secretary	Norah Gould
Treasurer	Derek Coleman
Committee	Margaret Hylton [Exhibitions] Fiona Cauter [Trophies] Henry Jagers [Posters] Alan Browning [Newsletter]

10. Appointment of auditor

Barrie Hylton was appointed as auditor, proposed by Derek Coleman, seconded by Alex Reeve.

11. Builder's Report

Andrew Simmons reported that he is currently building one Trio per week. Comet Dinghies have now moved into larger premises on the same estate.

Along with all singlehanded dinghies, sales of the Comet have been quiet, with the main competition coming from secondhand Comets.

The Comet Awareness campaign had not been productive.

Andrew drew attention to the Comet Mino, launched at these National Championships. It gives a smaller sail area, using a shorter bottom mast section, and is aimed at youngsters and light weights. It is cheaper than the conventional Comet rig. As the hull is the same, the Mino will become part of the Comet number sequence.

A question raised about a centre ridge to help people get into the dinghy would require a rule change.

12. Any Other Business:

a] The Treasurer commented that he is doing all the finances manually. As he has access to a computer and printer he is considering alternative methods. Errol Edwards supported the Treasurer.

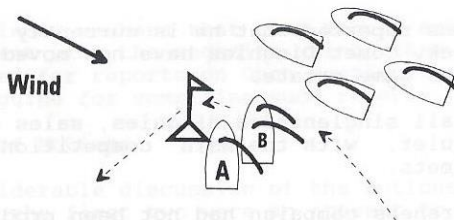
b] Diana Thompson asked for her appreciation of the Association stand at exhibitions to be put on record.

RACING RULES CLINIC CASE 5

Here is a very interesting racing situation sent in by John Windibank (Comet 555). It is a common situation arising under Rule 42.3

Rule 42.3(a): A yacht that establishes an inside overlap is entitled to room under rule 42.1(a) only when, at that time, the outside yacht :-

- i) is able to give room and
- ii) when the overlap is established from clear astern, is more than two of her overall lengths from the mark or obstruction



Boat A luffing boat B sailed into boat B's spinnaker. Boat A was then in danger of being capsized by A's spinnaker and bore off. B continued oblivious to the protestations of A and pulled clear ahead. A then established an inside overlap on boat B when they dropped their spinnaker in the water approaching the next mark but outside the two boat length from it. B had now virtually stopped and tried to give boat A water but was obstructed by other boats who could not respond. Boat A was forced into the mark by B.

Boat A completed penalty turns for hitting the mark as he understood that he could not protest B under Rule 42.3(a). This action cost him the race and with no witnesses he was unlikely to win a protest with the luffing incident.

Question 1: Was boat A right in his interpretation of Rule 42.3(a) and should he have done turns?

Question 2: Boat A had done nothing wrong here so is there any hope of redress in this situation? What would you advise?

Assessment:

This situation, of course, involves two separate issues of luffing and, subsequently, mark rounding.

I cannot give a definitive answer to the luffing issue because all the facts are not stated but my immediate impression is that boat A was in the right and that boat B failed to keep clear.

However, the facts relating to the mark rounding issue are clear and I would rule as follows:-

Question 1:

Yes, A was right in his interpretation of Rule 42.3a and was correct in taking the penalty. Many sailors do not understand that there are two parts under this rule to establishing an inside overlap:- being more than two boat lengths from the mark and the ability of the outside boat to give room.

In this case, it is stated that B tried to give room but was not able to because of both being virtually stopped and obstructed by other boats.

A had no rights to water.

Question 2:

No, A had no rights to redress. Rule 69 clearly states that redress may only be requested for a finishing place being prejudiced by:-

- i) improper action or omission of the committee,
- ii) rendering assistance,
- iii) physical damage caused by a give-way boat or
- iv) a boat infringing the principles of fair sailing and good conduct.

None of these apply.

I have the overall sympathy for boat A who appears to have been fouled in the luffing issue but she was wrong in attempting to claim water at the mark and must suffer the penalty. Her only satisfaction would have been to have promptly protested boat B for the earlier collision.

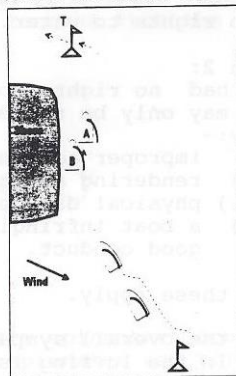
Keith Lamdin (Comets 55 and 241, Aylesbury S.C.)

RACING RULES CLINIC CASE 6

Here is another racing situation submitted by John Windibank, a common situation that can arise on small lakes and rivers, and which also involves Rule 42.3.

Rule 42.3(b): Continuing obstructions. When yachts are passing a continuing obstruction, such as a shoal or the shore or another vessel, Rule 42.3a(ii) does not apply and a yacht clear astern may establish an overlap between a yacht clear ahead and the obstruction, provided, at that time, there is room for her to pass between them in safety.

Sailing towards mark T, boat A was being overtaken by a faster boat B. Well before an overlap occurred, boat A luffed to windward to protect his wind and encourage B to pass him to leeward. B however continued to pass to windward and achieved an overlap very close to the shore as per the diagram. Boat B called for water but boat A, who was within two boatlengths of the shore, refused to give water under Rule 42.3(b). B argued that A was sailing above a proper course but:-



Question 1: Can the course necessitated by luffing to protect your wind be considered a proper course?

Question 2: Was A right to refuse water to B?

Question 3: Can B claim water in a similar situation on a proper course?

Assessment:

Question 1: No.

The definition of proper course makes clear that it is the course sailed, in the absence of other boats affected, to finish as quickly as possible. Given that boat A would have normally preferred to sail a straight line course to mark T, and only luffed as a tactical manoeuvre to protect her wind, her new course cannot be considered as a proper course for the purpose of the rules.

Question 2: Yes.

Rule 42.3(b) makes clear that boat B may only establish an inside overlap on boat A when there is room for boat B to pass between boat A and the shore in safety. Room is defined as the space needed to manoeuvre in a seamanlike manner in the prevailing conditions.

Given the facts stated of boat A being within 2 boat lengths of the shore, boat B establishing an overlap very close to the shore and the likely shallow water off the shore, I do not believe there was room to pass in safety and boat B had no rights.

There is a potential conflict between the rights of the boat clear ahead to sail no closer to the shore than safety dictates and the rights of the boat clear astern to water where the boat ahead may be sailing a more tactical course but, when in doubt, the ruling will always be in favour of safety.

Question 3: No

Rule 42.3 makes no reference to proper course and boat B has no claim on these lines.

Boat B is only able to require boat A not to sail above her proper course once she has established a position of mast abeam as stated in Rule 39.1 and there are no facts in this situation to indicate that boat B ever reached mast abeam.

Two interesting situations and I hope my rulings are clear.

Keith Lamdin (Comets 55 and 241, Aylesbury S.C.)

HIKING RIDGE

At the 1995 AGM I brought up the subject of a ridge, on the cockpit floor at the centre-line, that can be used, by shorter sailors like myself, when trying to hike out when a gust comes. (My height is 5ft 4ins).

I have used a piece of wood for this purpose, tied securely with thin line from the two toe-strap plates and this has proved very useful on the few occasions when the wind has been strong this Winter. The section of the wood is 3" by 0.5" (actually a piece of skirting board) giving me a similar purchase to the ridge on the bottom of a Topper, a class which I have been sailing for many years. It allows me to have the toe straps loose enough to get my weight out over the side without that frightening moment of trying to push off from the other side of the cockpit and hoping that my foot catches under the strap before I shoot over the side.

I was advised at the AGM that as the fitting is not permanent it "hopefully does not infringe the class rules" but I would like to ask whether other shorter sailors have found it difficult to get out fast enough to keep the Comet flat and if they have tried something similar. I would be very happy to advise anyone who would like to try this modification and report back.

Brian Welham (Comet 160, ICI Slough)

Editor's note: There seems to be a discrepancy here, in the minutes of the AGM, under item 11, Builder's report, the wording is: "A question raised about a centre ridge to help people get into the dinghy would require a rule change." I suggest that this is resolved at the 1996 AGM, preferably by a proposed amendment to the rules.

JUNIOR PAGE

JUNIORS AT THE NATIONALS

Last year Glossop and District Sailing Club hosted their first ever Comet Open. It had a good turnout of 15 boats and I came 7th overall. We sail on a reservoir that, when full, is nearly half a mile wide and a mile long.

This year we are very privileged to be hosting the Comet Nationals. I have never sailed at a Comet Nationals as I rely on my dad to ferry me and my Comet around. Unfortunately my dad worked shifts and many weekends so it was "Bye bye Nationals".

NOT THIS YEAR!!!

There must be several youngsters (under 18) who, like me, have been unable to get to the Nationals or have just thought it not really worth their while. It's a fun event when all's said and done so why not make the effort. There's a prize even for the first junior.

It really would be nice to see a few younger sailors battling it out against the adults and veterans in order to show them we are here!! So start pestering your parents and get them to bring you and your Comet up for the Nationals.

See you there.

David Gilder (age 17, Comet 307)

CALLING YOUNG COMET SAILORS

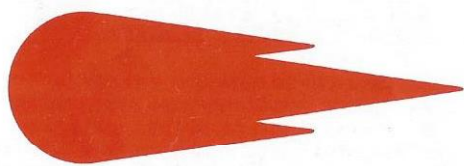
Will you be under 18 on the 31st December 1996? Are you interested in representing the Comet Class Association at the Royal Lympington Endeavour Regatta?

If you can answer 'yes' to both of these questions, please contact John Windibank or Norah Gould (telephone numbers are on the inside of the front cover).

The Royal Lympington Endeavour Regatta will take place on Saturday 2nd November 1996, and will be held on an invitation only basis, with four boats from each class. There will be two sections: 'Seniors', aged under 18 and 'Juniors', aged under 15 years.

The Committee would like to hear of any young people who are keen to take part.

Norah Gould, Secretary.



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association