



NEWSLETTER NUMBER 41
WINTER 1996/7

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Front cover:

Comet and Mino sailing together

(Photo: Andrew Simmons)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Well another year has slipped away and especially us older helms, who can see the full stop beckoning, have savoured every minute of it. Speaking personally, I have had my most successful season ever sailing Comets so there's hope for us all out there.

This time last year I ended my message by revealing all ??, well not quite all but the secret of the Wilkins success which Jean Wilkins put down to a good diet. Well this year I am pleased to report that a lot of you took the advice and the gap between the Wilkins and the rest of us has closed appreciably. Mark however saved their marvellous record by winning the Orbital Trophy with the last race of the season, in spite of my double dose of greens everyday for three weeks. So I sadly have to conclude that Jean wasn't entirely right, fast sailing also has something to do with talent.

Seriously, its been a marvellous sailing year, with lots of thanks to all the clubs and all the efforts of hundreds of people who help. Congratulations to all our winners and to the rest of us, we all won if we enjoyed it.

I was very pleased (*and a little embarrassed but not too much*) to win the Racing category in our Photographic competition and Margaret Hylton won the Fun category. There were a lot more entries this year and I found all the entries enjoyable and worthy of winning and you will be able to judge for yourselves with the displays.

Norah has been busily chivvying clubs for next years Open programme dates and this is now almost complete. The Championship events have been confirmed as 24th and 25th May for the Inland Championship at Staunton Harold Sailing Club and 29th to 31st August for the National Championship and AGM at Hampton Pier Sailing Club. At the AGM I will not be standing for re-election as chairman, I have had over 5 very happy years as chairman and think a change will be good for the Class and you can be sure that a first class candidate has been approached to stand for election. The perversity of life with masses of unemployment seems to ensure that those of us lucky enough to be in work are asked to do more and more to keep our jobs and my spare time will be severely curtailed in the years ahead.

The London Boat Show starts on the 4th January until 12th, the Birmingham Exhibition runs from 15th to 23rd February and Sailboat is 1st and 2nd March, so see you there.

You will see from the New Membership Application form that Derek has redesigned it this year to take account of the Constitutional Changes. Fill it in NOW and post it off, for non-renewal will mean that you will not be sent the next Perihelion. There is a little question at the bottom of the form to enable us to check our receipts from Noble Marine, just answer YES or NO to that.

Finally it only remains for me to wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year from the Committee and hopefully we will see you all next year.



John Windibank , Chairman Comets 555 & 700

FIRST SIX AT THE OPEN MEETINGS

WESTERN AREA

Arden

- 1 555 J Windibank
- 2 633 J Edwards
- 3 650 P Hossell
- 4 644 N Ford
- 5 211 C Weston
- 6 48 M. Hall

EASTERN AREA

Littleton

- 1 500 H Jagers
- 2 314 H Dodd
- 3 626 L Dean
- 4 657 M Wilkins
- 5 186 S Laming
- 6 160 B Welham

NORTHERN AREA

Redditch

- 1 63 C Robinson
- 2 563 D Stephens

SOUTHERN AREA

Pingewood

- 1 573 A Reeve
- 2 650 P Hossell
- 3 63 C Robinson
- 4 150 R Hamilton
- 5 555 J Windibank
- 6 160 B Welham

Kingsmead

- 1 657 M Wilkins
- 2 150 R Hamilton
- 3 555 J Windibank
- 4 500 H Jagers
- 5 186 P Laming
- 6 314 H Dodd

Redesmere

- 1 555 J Windibank
- 2 500 H Jagers
- 3 331 S Heyes
- 4 650 P Hossell
- 5 648 B Hamilton

Note: These results are those that count towards the Traveller's Trophies. Results accrued by sailors who are not members of the Comet Class Association are omitted.

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is a smaller issue, not so many of you have contributed this time, and there's no "Talking to . . ." article. But, as usual, John Windibank has provided all the open competition results together with superb descriptive narratives.

The Mino

There are more views on the Mino in this issue, and it is my view that this is the time when much discussion on the Mino should take place, hence the cover photograph of a Comet and a Mino sailing together. A decision must be made sooner or later on how the Mino fits in formally in the Comet Class. Possibilities are the Mino rig as an acceptable alternative to the full rig, or like the Laser, where, as I understand it, the different sized rigs have different handicaps for mixed fleet racing but in class racing the results are always treated separately.

The Comet Class Association is of course open to all to join, and all members are welcome to contribute to Perihelion. As Editor, I will refer to a Comet Mino as a "Mino" and a full-rigged Comet as a "Comet", until such time as the Mino is deemed a Comet in the Association Measurement Rules.

To encourage progress toward the decision on the status of the Mino, I feel that members must be quite clear on just what the Mino is like, so that each of us can decide which rig best suits us. In this issue, I have written a short armchair sailor's comparison of the Comet and the Mino. This only covers the main points and I invite any member to improve on it. In parallel with this there should appear in Perihelion a more comprehensive practical comparison than has appeared in the Mino articles so far. So I invite anyone who has sailed both Comet and Mino to write a sailing comparison. A Spring sail by Keith Lamdin perhaps?

After views are expressed in issues 42 & 43 the way may or may not be clear to the proposal of motions on the formal status of the Mino at the AGM in August.

Technical articles

On the subject of technical articles, Roger Johnstone has reminded me that some newer members may not be aware of the quite large number of articles that have been printed in Perihelion over the years, so I have prepared a list of them on page 16 and 17. The articles by Keith Lamdin are being re-issued in booklet form, but the Committee has yet to discuss how any later articles might be disseminated, given permission from the authors. I suggest that, to get a feel for any demand, any of you wanting some articles give me a ring.

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Alan Browning, Editor.

● ORBITAL RESULTS - 1996

							Tidals	Nats	Discard	Points	Posn
657 M Wilkins	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	6	3	7	1
555 J Windibank	1	1	1	1	2	3	7	7	3	8	2
500 H Jagers	1	1	2	2	4	4	-	18	4	13.5	3
650 P Hossell	1	2	2	3	3	4	10	16	4	14.75	4
573 A Reeve	1	1	1	3	4	7	-	1	20	16.25	5
353 G Wilkins	1	2	3	3	5	6	3	3	-	19.75	6
160 B Welham	3	3	5	6	6	6	-	9	7	29	7
150 R Hamilton	2	2	4	5	9	11	-	11	-	33	8
95 H Back	1	3	4	5	8	15	4	15	16	35.75	9
625 T Best	3	3	4	7	9	10	-	24	11	36	10
314 H Dodd	2	4	5	6	8	12	-	12	-	37	11
303 D Coleman	5	5	6	6	8	8	9	19	9	38	12
633 J Edwards	2	3	6	9	14	26	14	26	-	60	13
549 M Vinson	2	3	12	14	17	18	-	14	-	66	14
518 R Ballam	10	11	12	12	13	14	11	22	15	72	15
117 M Thompson	9	9	14	18	20	21	-	21	21	91	16
62 E Power	10	14	16	18	20	21	16	-	-	99	17
575 F Cauter	7	16	17	19	22	25	28	-	28	106	18
50 D Thompson	14	17	19	22	23	27	-	28	27	122	19
259 B Sandlc	16	16	20	23	23	29	29	-	-	127	20

Qualification for the Orbital Trophy series required attendance at one Championship and meetings in at least two Areas.

The six best results to count and ties decided by the position at the National Championship.

(Sorry about the unven typing - new computer, not used to it yet ! Ed)

APHELION RESULTS - 1996

EASTERN AREA TROPHY

	FISHR	CRAWL	CHIPS	LITTL	KINGS	Points	Posn
657 M Wilkins	3	2	0.75	4	0.75	3.5	1
500 H Jagers	4			0.75	4	8.75	2
95 H Back	0.75		3	8	16	11.75	3
314 H Dodd		4	8	2	6	12	4
353 G Wilkins	2	6	5			13	5
186 S Laming			4	5	5	14	6
555 J Windibank	5	15	7	14	3	15	7
160 B Welham		5	6	6	10	17	8
625 T Best		3		10	15	28	9
650 P Hossell	10			11	8	29	10
188 S Thompson	8	9			12	29	11
303 D Coleman	11	10	11	16	9	30	12
573 A Reeve		3		7	20	30	13
549 M Vinson		12	2	17	18	31	14
427 K Moody	6		9	17		32	15
518 R Ballam	12	13	10	15	14	35	16
300 K Bullock		11	12	13	19	36	17
117 M Thompson	9	18	26	20	21	47	18
247 B O'Herlihy	14		17	24	17	48	19
62 E Power			14	18	21	53	20
259 B Sandle	16	20	23		23	59	21
50 D Thompson	17	22	27	23	27	62	22
575 F Cauter		19	28	22		69	23

NORTHERN AREA TROPHY

	WRWK	REDD	CHEST	CHASE	COMB	REDS	Points	Posn
331 S Heyes			2	0.75	0	3	5.75	1
650 P Hossell	9		0.75	4	4	4	8.75	2
500 H Jagers	7			7	0.75	2	9.75	3
670 P Hayes				3	5	7	15	4
633 J Edwards			6		3	9	18	5
437 B Hardy	2			6		10	18	6
508 M Smith			4	8		8	20	7
411 W Ablett			3	8		12	23	8
643 K Appleby	11		5	9		11	25	9

WESTERN AREA TROPHY

	SHEAR	SBING	MERTH	COTSW	ARDEN	Points	Posn
555 J Windibank	2	0.75		3	0.75	3.5	1
650 P Hossell		6	3	2	4	8	2
419 P Govier	11	8	0.75			18.75	3
395 M Boyce	12		6	9		27	4

SOUTHERN AREA TROPHY

	ICI	FRENS	AYLES	SEAFR	PING	Points	Posn
573 A Reeve	4	0.75			0.75	5.5	1
657 M Wilkins	0.75	4		3		7.75	2
555 J Windibank		6	0.75	4	5	9.75	3
150 R Hamilton	2	5			4	11	4
160 B Welham	7	9	3	8	6	16	5
303 D Coleman	6	8	8	5		19	6
650 P Hossell	8	10	18		2	20	7
625 T Best	11	7	9			27	8
63 C Robinson	15		15		2	32	9
575 F Cauter	16	17	25	7		40	10
641 P Hind		20	11		12	43	11

The Apelion Trophy series required entry in 3 events to qualify and the best 3 results arecounted.

● PERIHELION

The next issue of Perihelion will be circulated in March 1997. Contributions to me by the end of February please.

Alan Browning, Editor

ORBITAL AND APHELION TROPHY EVENTS, 1996

Orbital Trophy

1996 has proved to be the most competitive and successful programme of events ever staged by the Comet Class. Starting back in April at Shearwater and progressing through 23 events to an incredible climax at Kingsmead in October.

Coming into the last event **John Windibank**, with 4 wins to his credit, could only be beaten by **Mark Wilkins** and then only if he won. The third spot could be claimed with a good result by either Henry Jagers, Phil Hossell or Alex Reeve. Heather Back, Hiedi Dodd and Sue Laming had ambitions on the Eastern Title and the top Lady spot, so competition was intense.

John and Mark had one win each coming to the last race of the year but they both trailed Robert Hamilton with 2 second places and Henry was well positioned, so Mark still needed a win. Champions are champions because a crisis brings out the best in them and needing to win Mark sailed his best race of the day and went on to win and hit the jackpot by picking up three trophies on the day and his third Orbital Title in four years.

Mark Wilkins' win in the Orbital Trophy ensured the incredible record of the Wilkins family who have claimed 12 national titles and a win in each of the last six years. This year Mark had wins at Cotswold, Chipstead, ICI and Kingsmead, second at the Tidal Nationals and an Aphelion win. **John Windibank** had his best season as a Comet sailor with four open wins, second in the Orbital and an Aphelion title.

Third this year was **Henry Jagers** who has had his best year since 1991, when he won the trophy, and with 3 wins in this years event including the event with our largest entry of 43 boats at Littleton.

Consistently well placed throughout, and with narrow defeats in the Northern and Eastern Aphelion events, **Phil Hossell** also achieved his best Orbital result with a 4th place and was second in both the Northern and Western Aphelion's and had a good win at Chester.

Following his success at last years Inlands, **Alex Reeve** capped it this year by becoming National Champion and winner of the Southern Aphelion and with two other Open wins he finished fifth in the Orbital.

Most of us would have been delighted with two thirds in our National Championships, but to **Guy Wilkins** this must go down as a relative failure. Guy recorded one win this season and was 6th in the Orbital.

For **Brian Welham** this was a “not quite” season, with good results at Sutton Bingham and Aylesbury and with a race win at the National Championships he challenged strongly all season to record seventh place in the Orbital.

Robert Hamilton was the highest placed junior in the Orbital and was eighth overall. This extremely talented sailor was second twice and runner up for the National Junior Title, and a talent to be watched for next year.

Although owning a Comet for many years, this was **Heather Back's** first racing season with the Class and she was the first Lady, finishing ninth overall in the Orbital. Heather was the Tidal National Lady Champion and fourth in that event and recorded a class win at Fishers Green.

Tony Best had an average season for him but remains a fast competitive sailor whose best result this year was probably his very good third at Crawley in difficult tactical conditions. Tony was tenth in this years Orbital.

Eleventh was **Hiedi Dodd** who had another good season and retained her Ladies National Title. Honestly competitive and improving with every race Hiedi mastered the strong winds at the Nationals and recorded a stunning second place in the light winds at Littleton. **Derek Coleman** had another enjoyable season, heavily built, Derek nevertheless achieves remarkably good results in light winds as he proved at Sutton Bingham. **John Edward's** results included a second and third place but John's position would have been better with a discard.

It was an “in and out” season for **Martin Vinson** who's best result was an excellent second at Chipstead.

Robin Ballam joined **Diana and Mike Thompson** from Crawley Mariners and a trio of Chipstead sailors **Emer Power, Fiona Cauter and Barry Sandle** made up the twenty Orbital qualifiers.

A record number qualified this year and Chipstead was again top club with six qualifiers and ICI had 4, those two clubs making up half of the total. Chipstead provided the winner and runner up, but the Orbital event looks to have a more national feel with good results from sailors of all the areas.

442 competitors entered our events, 100 more than last year and the average attendance went up to over 19 boats per event. **Phil Hossell** was our top traveller attending 18 events, another record. John Windibank with 16, Derek Coleman

13, Mark Wilkins and Henry Jaggars with 11 events were the other competitors entering over 10.

Lady helms accounted for a quarter of the qualifiers and on their day they are capable of beating the best of us and did.

Littleton was our top Open event this year with an incredible 43 entries and Chipstead with 34, Kingsmead 33, Crawley, last years top spot, and Aylesbury both with 32 all topped 30 along with our Championship events

Most of the events were better attended than last year and this must go down as our biggest and best season so far.

Aphelion events

The Aphelion events were as popular as ever this year and the Eastern Area must rate as the toughest event to win that's ever been staged by the Comet Class. The event attracted 160 competitors and the meetings averaged 32 entries. Coming to the last event Henry Jaggars and Heather Back had an outside chance of beating Mark Wilkins for the trophy but on the day it was Mark that triumphed, with Henry taking second spot and Heather third.

Steve Heyes needed a good performance to take the Northern Aphelion trophy but Henry Jaggars and Phil Hossell with good results could still win. But cometh the day cometh the man and Steve achieved a good third behind Henry, sufficient to clinch his first Aphelion title, with Phil second and Henry third.

The Southern Aphelion attracted an entry of 100 and Alex Reeve, John Windibank and Robert Hamilton all had hopes of overhauling Mark Wilkins for the title. Alex Reeve mastered the near gale force changeable winds at Pingewood to achieve the win he needed to take the trophy from Mark second, John third, and Robert fourth.

John Windibank and Phil Hossell battled out the last event of the Western Aphelion, both had a win on the day but on this occasion John went on to win the event and take his first Aphelion Trophy event title with Paul Govier qualifying third.

John Windibank, Chairman Comets 700 & 555

COMET HALL OF FAME

Past Championship Winners

<u>National Champion</u>	<u>Ladies</u>	<u>Junior</u>
1983 Ken Potts		
1984 Bob Sandford		
1985 Stuart Ingham		
1986 Keith Lamdin		
1987 Jeff Penfold		
1988 Craig Moffatt	Hayley Penfold	
1989 Chris Sinclair	Margaret Hylton	
1990 Chris Sinclair	Tracey Davies	
1991 Guy Wilkins	Tracey Davies	
1992 Guy Wilkins	Anne Brook	Nancy Gould
1993 Guy Wilkins	Christine Stack	Jake Sutton
1994 Guy Wilkins	Christine Stack	Ian Jubb
1995 Guy Wilkins	Heidi Dodd	Robert Hamilton
1996 Alex Reeve	Heidi Dodd	Andrew Bowes

Association Trophy

1988	
1989	Damon Perrin
1990	Guy Wilkins
1991	Henry Jaggars
1992	Guy Wilkins
1993	Mark Wilkins
1994	Guy Wilkins
1995	Alex Reeve
1996	John Challener

Orbital Trophy (National)

Craig Moffatt
Andrew Pierce
James Withall
Henry Jaggars
Guy Wilkins
Mark Wilkins
Mark Wilkins
Jake Sutton
Mark Wilkins

Apheilion Trophy (Regional)

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1992 Mark Wilkins	Guy Wilkins	-	Nancy Gould
1993 Errol Edwards	Mark Wilkins	-	Mark Wilkins
1994 Richard Smallwood	Mark Wilkins	Jake Sutton	Mark Wilkins
1995 Errol Edwards	Mark Wilkins	Jake Sutton	Jake Sutton
1996 Steve Heyes	Mark Wilkins	Alex Reeve	John Windibank

SAILBOAT '97

RYA SAILBOAT'97 - ALEXANDRA PALACE 1-2 MARCH

Sailing's big day out looks set to be a winner in more ways than one.

Sailboat, the RYA National Dinghy and Windsurfing Show once again returns to Alexandra Palace over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd of March 1997 with some big surprises in store.

New racing rules on show at Sailboat

A major attraction this year will be the opportunity to meet our Olympic stars and get the inside track from them on boat speed and handling techniques. As always the show will be packed with all the very latest ideas on equipment and innovations afloat and ashore. There will be essential briefing seminars on the new racing rules as well as the popular 'Question Time' sessions. The video wall will be featuring the best action from around the world including the '96 Olympics Regatta.

Fab Four

A highlight of this year's show will be the appearance on Saturday of the Beatle look alike band 'The Fab Four'. They kick off the show party at 5.30pm and all visitors are invited to take part. To make the party swing each club or class stand has been invited to host their own members' reception at this time and the show organisers have arranged a special show extension until 7.30pm. Jenny Curry, the show's co-ordinator, commented 'We are inviting all visitors to what we hope will be sailing's biggest ever party!'

Further Big Draws this year

Another fun feature will be the regular hourly prize draws. Every entry ticket bought on the door or in advance will automatically become that day's draw ticket with the chance to win one of many great prizes. Saturday's prizes include clothing and equipment, on Sunday each hourly star prize will be a brand new boat or board. Visitors are reminded to keep their ears peeled as prizes unclaimed within 10 minutes of announcement will be redrawn.

Free Drinks all round?

Of particular note for club, class or other organisations is the advance ticket service. You avoid the queues and save £1 on every adult ticket (normally £6.50) and 50p on childrens tickets (normally £2.00). The organisers are also offering one free ticket for each group of 10 people, added to the advance booking discount this could add up to a saving of £16.50. Enough to buy free drinks all round perhaps? The advance ticket hotline number is 01703 650885.

Also to note is the special Speedlink Coach scheme, arranged by Yachts and Yachting, which will drop you at the door of the show, letting you enjoy the party all the more. For details of this service contact Alison Duffus on 01293 507579.

Sailboat opens on Saturday 1st March between 10.00am - 7.30pm and on Sunday 2nd March between 10.00 - 5.00pm. For more information about the show contact Jenny Curry at the RYA on 01703 627425

Press release,
Royal Yachting Association, 14 November 1996

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JAN - MAR 1997

- January 4 - 12: London Boat Show, Earls Court
February 15 - 23: Leisure Exhibition, NEC Birmingham
March 1 - 2: Sailboat '97, Alexandra Palace

For your diary:

- May 24 - 25: Inlands, Staunton Harold S.C., (our representative is Henry Jaggers, telephone 01530 563030)
August 29 - 31: National Championships, Hampton Pier S.C.
Herne Bay, Kent

BUILDER'S REPORT

I'm sorry that it's been over a year since there's been a report from me. As usual it's been a busy year for Comet Dinghies, with roughly equal amount of Comets, Duos and Trios built. Not as many as last year but then we did overstock and haven't needed to build so many this year.

We build dinghies more or less continually all year round and at this time of year the stock is always starting to build up. It's good to have a nice selection of colours to show visitors and now we have finished our showroom we can display one of each in a dust-free condition. People are beginning to realise that you don't need a day to travel to Devon any more, just about 3 hours from Birmingham or the West side of London.

Regarding the single-hander Comet, it's still a difficult market at the moment, but at least my competitors are having a tough time as well! There are always a few second-hand Comets around and it's good that an older Comet with the possible addition of a new sail can be instantly competitive, in fact some big fleets have been built up largely with second-hand Comets which is great as normally some people inevitably want a new dinghy, which is where I come in. As ever it's you, the Comet sailor, who is vitally important in boosting Comet numbers. You enjoy your dinghy and your enthusiasm does rub off on others. If there's an old "dormant" Comet at your club, try and get it out of hibernation but if that fails try and get the owner to sell it to someone who can use it and enjoy it.

There's been a fair bit of healthy debate recently about the Comet Mino and it's place within or alongside the Comet Class. I can imagine situations where a lighter than average Comet sailor could be faster with a Mino rig in heavy weather in the sea, where capsizes really need to be avoided. The combination of more efficient sail (compared to a reefed sail), lower and lighter mast and the important fact that the helmsman is more confident and thus more relaxed would all help to improve performance.

This wouldn't need to happen many times before a Mino rig would become an essential piece of kit for quite a few Comet sailors at open meetings and championships. I wouldn't like to see this happen as it goes against the strict one design principles of the class.

The Mino rig opens up Comet "type" sailing to a whole new generation of youngsters who, hopefully, when they get older will buy full size rigs and join the main Comet fleet. Keep spreading the Comet word at your club, if anyone wants brochures and '97 price lists for leaving at the club, please give me a ring.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See some of you at the Boat Show.

Andrew Simmons, Builder.

Comet Dinghies

Comet spares and accessories always available from:

Comet Dinghies,
Horsepond Meadow,
South Molton,
Devon EX36 4EJ

Telephone: 01769 574358

Sails:

The current price of the standard Hyde sail is £235 plus carriage.

Mino rig:

£350 plus carriage £12 will get you the Mino rig package. This is a **Mino sail** (complete with logo and sail numbers) a **shorter bottom mast section** and a **standard upper mast section**.

(Price reduction if your own upper mast section can be used)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Alan,

There was a reference in the last Perihelion to the original series of excellent articles by Keith Lamdin. These were pretty current when I first started sailing a Comet - 249, back in 1989 - and I still refer to them regularly. Although cost is obviously a key consideration, I'm sure that newcomers to the class would welcome even a very budget-conscious and basic equivalent of **The Laser Book**. There could be coverage for complete beginners, plus the type of intermediate and advanced notes in Keith's articles etc..

And, taking a leaf out of Yachts and Yachting's "Dinghy Forum", why not a series of tips and "lessons of experience" articles by current and past Comet champions, leading lady helms etc. (I remember a Shirley Robertson article in Yachts & Yachting a couple of years ago, where she posed the great question for all single-handers: "Are you riding or driving?" It was the kind of superb one-liner that often comes to mind out there in heavy conditions!)

Perihelion gets better all the time, by the way.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,

Roger Johnstone (Comet 696)

INDEX OF TECHNICAL ARTICLES

Spurred on by Roger Johnstone's letter, I am reminded that members who have joined the Association recently may not be aware of the many articles that have been printed in Perihelion, since issue 8, on the techniques of sailing and racing a Comet. Here is a list of them:

Issues 8 to 12: **Sailing your Comet** - 1 to 5 by Keith Lamdin

(These 5 articles are being re-issued in booklet form by the Association. The first booklet is already available to members.)

Issues 14 to 17: **Racing your Comet** - 1 to 4 by Keith Lamdin

(I believe these will also be re-issued in booklet form by the Association.)

Issues 18 to 22: **Know the rules** - 1 to 5 by Keith Lamdin

Issues 23,24,26,27:

The Comet for really raw beginners - 1 to 4 by Alan Browning

Issue 29: **Race preparation** by Guy Wilkins

Issue 30: **A few thoughts on Comet racing** by Mark Wilkins

Issue 32: **Comet capsized recovery** by John Windibank

Righting a capsized Comet by John Regnard

Comet sail controls by Errol Edwards

Techniques of winning by John Regnard

Issue 33: **Difficult downwind ?** by Keith Lamdin

Comet capsized avoidance by Richard Smallwood

Making heavy weather of Comet sailing by Alex Reeve

Running before the storm by Errol Edwards

Talking to **Jake Sutton**

Issue 35 Talking to **Henry Jagers**

Issue 36 Talking to **the Thompson family**

Issue 37 Talking to **Richard Smallwood**

Issue 39 Talking to **Andrew Simmons**

Issue 40 Talking to **John Windibank**

Issues 34 to 37: **Fluid flow** - 1 to 4 by Alan Browning

As I have mentioned in my Editor's Notes, it seems not impossible to make all of these available to members, if there is a demand for them. The masters of all Perihelion issues are, I understand, held by Andrew Simmons at Comet Dinghies, but I also have the text of articles from issue 23 onwards. For the time being I am prepared to accept any requests, to assess the demand and, if there are not too many, distribute them at nominal cost.

Alan Browning, Editor

FIRST IMPRESSIONS, COMET 103

Herewith my contribution for Perihelion as inspired by your comments in issue 40. I find it a very readable 'Newsletter' and I am pleased to find that I am not alone with some of my problems!

I'm 37 years old and have been sailing dinghies and cruisers since I was 8. When I sailed at Poole Harbour it was with my Dad, but on moving to Northumberland I found that, although I could sail with my Dad, I couldn't with my husband !!! Hence the Comet, my first single-handed boat.

My first impression of my newly acquired Comet 103 in November 1995 was GREAT. A comfortable, well laid out boat and fast enough to race - - - - - just what I wanted.

My second impression soon came upon me when I capsized. I found I could not right the boat without assistance and getting back into the boat was also very difficult. My main problem seemed to be that I could barely reach the dagger board, let alone climb on to it, Being female, weighing under 9 stone and barely 5'3" tall with short legs, I spent last winter weight training, determined to be able to right my Comet. From March until July I persevered, determined not to be beaten since I so liked my Comet, but to no avail, I still could not right it on my own.

In desperation I contacted Andrew Simmons. He was extremely helpful, despatching a pair of grab rails to help me get into the boat and telling me all about the Mino rig. I was dubious at first, what if I still could not right the boat?, is it me or the boat? I took the plunge and ordered the Mino rig.

My third impression - BRILLIANT. First 'sail' was a deliberate capsize with husband on the jetty holding the painter. She came up easily and to me she was a different boat. I am now confident and happy to sail in more than a force 2 using the Mino rig. I have to say racing (against Ospreys, Lasers, Flying 15s and cats!) is not so good, probably because I am always cautious and unless there is little wind, I use the Mino rig. But still, I have fun and that's the main thing.

There are no other Comets in our club and I have to say that having moved to wonderful, rural, Northumberland I have no desire to travel very far. However if any Comet owners want a holiday at Kielder, I can guarantee very interesting sailing in a lovely setting and a very warm welcome at Kielder Water Sailing Club. I thoroughly enjoy reading Perihelion so please keep up the good work,

FIRST IMPRESSIONS, COMET 25

Your offer to relive my first impressions of Comet 25 is too good to miss, here's my tale.

With a Topper and a Laser already in the family, both of which were the racing property of my teenage children, it was clear we needed something that my wife or I could sail with comfort and not trepidation, so, when the advert for a Comet turned up in the local free-ad at a reasonable price I leaped at it .

Well that was in February, we start sailing in April but I only get to sail alternate weekends (that misery of the sailing classes, WORK!). The spring brought light wispy airs to the Cotswolds, on my Sundays anyway, in these conditions I could compete with far better sailors and achieved some pleasing results and told anyone who would listen that this adult Topper was great.

I reconsidered my opinion by July and August, at the open meeting in our club (Cotswolds,S.C.) I swam as far as I sailed only achieving any result at all because the others where slower swimmers, but with watching the others and reading Perihelion I now know that sailing by the lee is strictly for amphibious laser sailors and that the transom should not rise above the gooseneck, my opinion is now on the rise again.

One good outcome of my sailing antics is that the Comet is regarded as **my** racing boat. My wife has yet to realise its potential, with the vision of my many submariner exploits still fresh in her memory, but this can't last.

Comet 25 needs a new sail to enhance the hull that's in super condition, perhaps next season will see it ready to compete with the other Comets in our club, I hope I'm up to the job.

Thanks for the chance to write about my favourite subject,

Bob Presley (Comet 25, Cotswold S.C.)

● MINO - COMET COMPARISON 1

To stimulate discussion on the relative merits of the Comet and the Mino, it seems right and proper that views should be expressed in Perihelion by members of the Association who have no vested interest in promoting the boats commercially, in a similar fashion to the assessments made in *Yachts & Yachting*.

Such comparison must be both theoretical and practical. Of course I am not at all qualified to write on the practical side, being a novice at sailing and without a Mino to sail. However, on the theoretical side, I am not entirely ignorant and I can make some comments simply from the boat dimensions and weights.

Theoretical discussion always entails some assumptions and technical terms and I follow the racing rules method of putting in *italic* print words that have a special meaning or, in this case, words that might be unfamiliar to some readers. My “definitions” are at the end of the article. For those readers who only want to read my conclusions, I have typed these **bold and underlined** in the text.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SMALLER SAIL

The Mino has a sail *area* of 54 sq ft compared with the Comet's 70 sq ft.

Sail force

From well-established aerodynamics the *force* on a sail, when set properly at a suitable angle to the wind, is proportional to the sail *area* and so, in **a given wind strength, the Mino sail will give 77% of the force that a Comet sail will.** If that is sufficient to maintain “hull speed”, then the Mino will not be at a disadvantage but in light winds the Comet will do better. The Comet will also gain in stronger winds by planing at a lower wind strength.

Heeling moment comparison

The total sail *force* acts at the *cg* of the sail and at right angles to it. The heeling *moment* is the height of this point multiplied by the *force* and **for the Mino the heeling moment is about 68% of that of the Comet. In practical terms you will have to sit out only two thirds as far from the centre-line.**

Sailing the Mino in strong winds

Aerodynamic theory also tells us that the *force* on the sail is proportional to the **square** of the speed of the apparent wind. **So, if you sit out the same amount in a Mino as you would in a Comet, you will be able to keep the boat upright in a stronger wind.**

The comparison is:

Comet, Wind strength:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mino, wind strength for same heeling moment:	1.1	2.3	3.5	4.7	5.9	7.0

You may find that table difficult to understand, but, for example, **if you can keep a Comet upright in a strength 3 wind, you should make 3.5 in a Mino.**

IMPLICATIONS OF A SMALLER MAST

The weight of the Comet mast and its sail is about 9.2 kg and that of the Mino some 2.1 kg lighter. Relating the reduction in mast weight to the total weight, the rest of the boat weighs about 56 kg and the person sailing, say 64 kg (10 stones). So, **the reduction in the overall weight of a Mino, when sailing, due to the lighter mast is a mere 1.6 percent,** not a lot to improve the boatspeed! But Andrew Simmons remarked in Perihelion 39 that it is enough to affect fore & aft balance.

The height of the *cg* of the mast from its base is, for the Comet, something like 230 cm and for the Mino about 35 cm less. **This difference in *cg* height is important in capsizing recovery,** for if the boat lies with the mast horizontal, the *moment* of the Mino mast is 35% less than that for the Comet, in real terms **nearly a kilogram less pull will be needed at the end of the daggerboard.** This matches Julie Gibbon's experience (page 18 in this issue) that the Mino is easier to pull up from a capsizing. Similarly, when sailing, at any angle of heel, the reduced *moment* of the Mino mast must give a better stability, but not a lot compared with the *moment* from the helm's weight, which can easily be a hundred times that.

Alan Browning (Comet 361)

A few words on the technical terms and assumptions that I have used:

Area: The area of this rectangular page is the height multiplied by the width. Areas of other shapes have to be calculated in different ways, but for example you need to know areas when you buy wallpaper or paint. We usually measure the area of sails in "square feet" or "square metres".

Force: An example of force is gravity, or weight, which, if you carry heavy shopping, can hurt your shoulders. For our purposes the strength of *forces* can be measured, as in shopping, in kilograms. *Forces* have not only a strength but act along a line, with the shopping example along your arms. In comparing the Mino and the Comet we are concerned with the weight of your mast and the wind *force* on your sail. The strength of the wind may be referred to as, say, “force 3”, but strictly this is not a force but the speed of the air.

Moment: Nothing to do with moments in time, the *moment* of a force is its turning effect. It is calculated by multiplying the *force* by the “moment arm”, the distance from a chosen point. For example, in a child’s see-saw, the *moment* of each child’s weight is that weight multiplied by the distance from the pivot. For a see-saw to balance, the total *moment* of all the children must add up to zero, that is, some of the *moments* will have to be negative, meaning distances on the other side of the pivot.

Centre of gravity: Every little bit of a mast has weight, like children on a see-saw, but these are joined together to form the complete mast and if the little weights are added up, we get the total mast weight. The line of action of the total weight always passes through a point called the *centre of gravity* (abbreviated to *cg*) and, like the see-saw, about the *cg* the *moments* are equal each side and you can lift up the mast with one hand there. A Comet mast section is the same size all the way along, and the *cg* is at the middle point. The complete mast has two sections, the lower one of thicker metal, so the *cg* is nearer to the heavy end.

The “*centre of gravity*” idea can also be used with *areas*, again calculated by *moments*. The wind *force* on our triangular sail acts at the “*cg*” of the sail, which is one third up from the foot.

Assumptions

As you can imagine, there are many simplifications in these theoretical calculations. One simple one I have made is that when the boat heels, it pivots about the base of the mast.

ARDEN OPEN

13 boats took part in the Comet open meeting on September 15 at Arden SC on the River Avon. The wind was virtually non existent on an exceptionally hot September day.

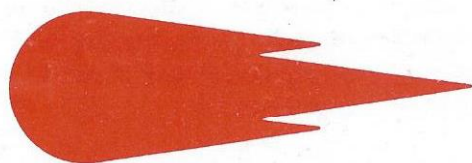
The first race started in zero wind conditions. The OOD optimistically set 4 laps. It took 10 minutes for all the boats to clear the start line and nearly an hour to complete 1 lap. The lead was held firstly by A Norton, then J Windibank, but on the run J Edwards kept close to the riverbank and took the lead at the third mark. The first lap was marred by many collisions resulting in penalty turns especially at the railway mark when 8 boats were trying to get round the mark where there was only room for half that number. The course was shortened and J Edwards managed to get clear of the fleet and win from J Windibank, P Hossell, N Ford, C Weston and A Norton.

In the second race J Windibank went for a port end start and took a commanding lead. J Edwards, P Hossell, N Ford and C Weston managed to leave the rest of the fleet behind. On the final lap J Edwards and P Hossell kept together on the long run and caught J Windibank. Approaching the final mark P Hossell made an inspired move and gained water and just managed to pip J Windibank and J Edwards at the finish.

After 2 races quarter of a point separated J Edwards, J Windibank and P Hossell. With all 3 races to count a good start was vital in the third race. J Windibank got off to a flyer, won the race in convincing style and even had his boat packed up before anyone else had finished. J Edwards, after getting stuck in the riverbank at the start, managed to pick up a wind shift to take him into second place which he kept to the end. J Tildesley, A Norton, N Ford, P Hossell and H Bayliss were in contention for the next places. Eventually P Hossell pulled through to take third, followed by J Tildesley and H Bayliss.

Overall Results (all 3 races to count):

1 st	700	J Windibank	(Chipstead SC)	4.75 points
2nd	633	J Edwards	(Chester S&CC)	
3rd	650	P Hossell	(Evesham SC)	6.75 points
4th	644	N Ford	(Chase SC)	1 5 points
5th	602	A Norton	(Arden SC)	22 points
6th =	211	C Weston	(Naseby SC)	25 points
6 th =	521	K Stevens	(Arden SC)	25 points
6th =	343	H Bayliss	(Arden SC)	25 points
Veteran		H Bayliss	(Arden SC)	5.75 points



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association