



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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Front cover:

Jake Sutton, our new National Champion

(Photo: Anne Browning)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Nine months in the job and my fourth report, doesn't time fly! When I took over from John, I knew roughly what was expected and what responsibilities were involved. Whether or not I am fulfilling my duties adequately is up to you to judge but I'm certainly enjoying trying!

Following our very successful week at the NEC exhibition (and I now know of at least three new Comet sailors arising from that), the Sailboat weekend at Alexandra Palace was further proof, if proof were needed, of the dependability and enthusiasm of our members. Our stand was in a very good position to catch the crowds and in addition to our usual array of photos, videos, and information on Comets and clubs, we displayed Comet 711 (thanks to Brian Welham) which attracted considerable interest. Thank you to everyone who helped over this very busy weekend.

At the time of writing, seven events from our 1998 programme are already behind us and the season is developing well. All the meetings I have sailed in were well organised, friendly, and enjoyable. Whilst the racing can be closely competitive at times, I can assure newcomers to our class and the more novice sailors that they will always be more than welcome. Attendance at open meetings is the best possible way to get even more enjoyment from your Comet.

I'm just back from the National Championships at Frensham Pond, and what a superb three days it proved to be, both on and off the water. There were 51 entries, our biggest ever, and as well as all the familiar old (and young) faces it was very gratifying to see many newcomers. The weather was fine and the wind, as I heard one top competitor remark, fair to everyone, providing a real test of our sailing and racing skills. Our new National Champion is Jake Sutton. I hope it will not embarrass him if I say that not long ago, when a junior, Jake was a brilliant if at times erratic sailor, now he is a few years older and his concentration, patience and determination have developed making him a very worthy champion.

A full account of the Championship racing should appear elsewhere but some words of thanks to our hosts are needed here. The organisation and catering were first rate and the clubhouse facilities, boat park, and launching were as good as I've experienced anywhere. Frensham Pond Sailing Club also presented the Class Association with a very handsome new perpetual trophy to be used as a team prize (won this year by Chipstead). Thank you Frensham Pond!

FIRST SIX AT THE
OPEN MEETINGS

This year's Annual General Meeting, held during the Championship, was very well attended and included people who came specially just for that evening. The small change to the Measurement Rules (see Perihelion 46) was approved after some discussion, the accounts were accepted, and your Committee were re-elected with the exception of Fiona who retires after many years of being responsible for all the prizes and mementoes. The full minutes of the AGM will be published in the autumn.

The Comet Class Association must, in boat percentage terms, be one of the best supported associations of any of the dinghy classes but there is always room for improvement! We have this year embarked on a membership drive which has already been very fruitful at least among more recently lapsed past members. There are, however, boat owners who lapsed from membership some years ago and with whom we have lost contact and others who, having bought second-hand boats, never have been members. We will do our best to contact and recruit these people too, either directly or through clubs. If you know of Comet owners who are not Association members perhaps you could exercise a little gentle persuasion. Leaflets and membership forms are available from myself, Derek, or Norah, or let us have the details and we will make the approach, its in all our interests!

There is still much of the season left and I'm looking forward to some more great sailing: I hope to meet more of you at the remaining opens, and why not take a weekend break and come to the Tidals at Brightlingsea 25/26 July? Should be good!

Well that's it for this issue except a reminder not to forget those entries for the Photographic Competition.

Good Sailing,

Henry Jagers, Chairman

FIRST SIX AT THE OPEN MEETINGS

NORTHERN AREA

Chester

1	650	P Hossell
2	500	H Jagers
3	331	S Heyes
4	670	P Hayes
5	641	P Hinde
6	633	J Edwards

Glossop

1	500	H Jagers
2	670	P Hayes
3	650	P Hossell
4	331	S Heyes
5	658	R Stevenson
6	585	P Herring

SOUTHERN AREA

Crawley

1	573	A Reeve
2	707	D Coleman
3	314	H Dodd
4	188	S Thompson
5	711	B Welham
6	492	I Beaumont

Frensham

1	642	J Sutton
2	565	R Smallwood
3	549	M Vinson
4	63	C Robinson
5	314	H Dodd
6	700	J Windibank

WESTERN AREA

Shearwater

1	642	J Sutton
2	534	J Regnard
3	418	N Cross
4	641	P Hinde
5	471	C Newton
6	419	P Govier

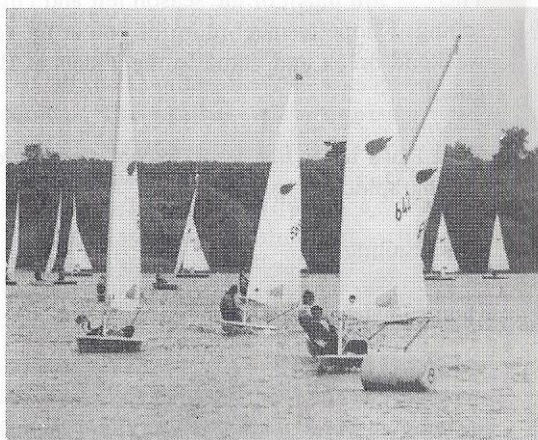
Sutton Bingham

1	650	P Hossell
2	707	D Coleman
3	460	M Govier
4	711	B Welham
5	500	H Jagers
6	25	R Presley

EASTERN AREA

Fishers Green

1	642	J Sutton
2	657	M Wilkins
3	573	A Reeve
4	500	H Jagers
5	314	H Dodd
6	549	M Vinson



At the Nationals: Paul Hinde (behind Jake) up with the leaders in race 7

RULES UPDATE

It is rather disappointing that, after some three years of detailed consideration, we are already into changes to the Racing Rules but, nine months after their introduction, that is the case!

The changes affect definitions and racing rules as follows:-

1. The Keep Clear definition is amended to require the give-way boat to permit the right-of-way boat to alter course in both directions without immediate contact. This removes the issue raised in a previous Perihelion and allows the right-of-way boat a sensible choice of either luffing or bearing away without being constrained by a give-way boat being too close.

2. The obstruction definition is extended to include boats covered by rule 21 being capsized, not in control after capsize, anchored or aground, or assisting those in danger. Whilst most would have already considered these as obstructions, it is useful to have it clearly defined.

3. Rule 14b is extended by the words "under this rule". Frankly, this appears to be a totally unnecessary clarification to solve a problem that didn't exist! The intent of the rule is unchanged and, as there never was any other rule applicable, its clarity unchanged.

4. Rule 17.1 has been totally rewritten but its intention remains the same. Apparently an issue was raised over onus of responsibility under this rule although I personally fail to see how any such confusion arose under the original wording.

The purpose of the rule remains that of preventing a boat from clear astern establishing a close-by leeward overlap and then sailing above her proper course to require the windward boat to keep clear. Remember that if the leeward overlap is established in any other way this rule does not apply and there are no limits to the windward boat's obligations.

Perhaps, if these are the only changes required, things are not too bad but experience suggests we may yet see more!

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

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT

The sixteenth National Championships were held over the Bank Holiday weekend at Frensham Pond Sailing Club. A record fifty-one boats took part, 13 from the home club. The visitors came from as far away as Kent, Dorset and Derbyshire. The event took place in glorious weather with a wind, mainly in the North West, Force 2.

The seven race series had very close racing, and although the new 1998 Champion, local sailor Jake Sutton from Frensham Pond had four firsts he had to fight every inch of the way. Over the week-end there were in fact eleven different boats in the top three race positions.

The first race was won by Mark Wilkins (Chipstead) after a tussle with Robert Hamilton (Taplow Lake) finishing second and Brian Welham (Taplow Lake) third.

In the second race Jake Sutton led from the start with Mark's brother Guy Wilkins (Chipstead) second and Robert Hamilton third.

Sunday's first two races were won by Jake Sutton with the Class Chairman Henry Jagers (Staunton Harold) seemingly tied to his tail! Guy Wilkins was third in race three and John Windibank (Chipstead) third in the fourth race.

The fifth race saw new names at the front with Ted Jefferies (Frensham Pond) leading round the first mark. Oli Slight, also from Frensham, managed to catch him on the second round pulling out a lead that was unassailable, we thought! Eventually Guy Wilkins worked his way through to win, with Heidi Dodd (Littleton) second and Oli third.

With five of the seven races counting for the Championship, by Monday Jake Sutton's five results had already won him the title. However, the sixth race saw a battle royal between Jake and Robert Hamilton. Robert eventually won with Ian Beaumont (Crawley Mariners) third.

Six boats were fighting for the first six places for most of the last race until Richard Smallwood (Frensham) and Jake Sutton pulled away exchanging positions continually. Jake crossed the line two feet ahead of clubmate Richard. Robert Hamilton was third.

Eleven of the boats were helmed by ladies and the ladies' title was very closely contested by Heidi Dodd (Littleton Sailing Club) and Heather Back (Mudeford S.C. in Dorset). Both of these have won the title before and by the end of the sixth race Heidi had a better points record, including a remarkable 2nd place in the fifth race, probably the nearest any lady has come to winning a race in the National Championships. Despite finishing in 6th place in the last race, Heather was not able to make up the deficit and Heidi Dodd is the new Lady Comet Champion.

Prize winners:

<u>National Champion:</u>	<u>JAKE SUTTON</u>	Frensham Pond
<u>Runner-up</u>	Guy Wilkins	Chipstead
<u>Ladies Prize:</u>	<u>HEIDI DODD</u>	Littleton
<u>Team trophy:</u>	Guy Wilkins, 2nd Mark Wilkins 3rd John Windibank 11th	<u>Chipstead SC</u>

This trophy is awarded to the club having the highest placed three boats. This year is the first time a team competition has been included in the Comet National Championships. It was inaugurated by Frensham Pond Sailing Club who have generously donated the perpetual trophy, a magnificent silver cup.

Junior's Prize: **ROBERT HAMILTON** Taplow Lake
(Under 17 years)

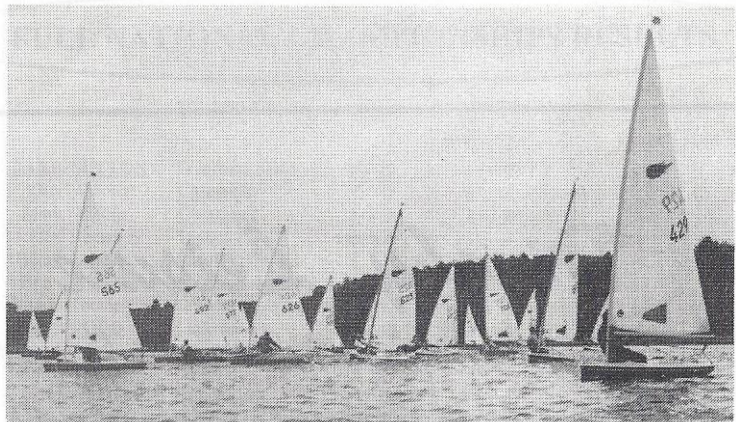
Veterans Prize: **RICHARD SMALLWOOD** Frensham Pond
(Over 50 years)

First Championship Prize: **Nick Warren** Littleton
(The highest placed helm taking part in their first National Championships in any class of boat).

Race Committee Prize: **Penny Vere** Upton Warren
A special prize awarded to Penny in recognition of her 4th place in the last race, while otherwise being more than half way down the fleet).

FULL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Points	Posn	Category
642	JAKE SUTTON	Frensham Pond	4	1	1	1	4	2	1	6	1	
353	Guy Wilkins	Chipstead	8	2	3	8	1	52	52	22	2	
657	Mark Wilkins	Chipstead	1	6	4	7	9	9	16	27	3	
573	Alex Reeve	Taplow Lake	14	4	49	5	6	5	11	31	4	
500	Henry Jiggers	Staunton Harold	6	16	2	2	13	10	14	33	5	V
711	Brian Welham	Taplow Lake	3	14	8	12	5	6	15	34	6	V
188	Simon Thompson	Crawley Mariners	13	11	5	6	10	17	7	39	7	
314	HEIDI DODD	Littleton	28	13	6	15	2	11	21	47	8	L
565	Richard Smallwood	Frensham Pond	21	8	10	49	16	13	2	49	9	V
95	Heather Back	Mudeford	12	22	11	14	7	16	6	50	10	L
700	John Windibank	Chipstead	23	5	19	3	11	14	23	52	11	V
492	Ian Beaumont	Crawley Mariners	10	20	16	9	15	3	20	53	12	
549	Martin Vinson	Littleton	24	10	7	23	22	4	17	60	13	
150	Robert Hamilton	Taplow Lake	2	3	52	52	52	1	3	61	14	J
745	Nick Warren	Littleton	7	24	13	10	21	15	18	63	15	F
707	Derek Coleman	Coney	11	26	12	13	23	23	10	69	16	V
650	Phillip Hossell	Evesham	16	21	20	19	12	28	5	72	17	
207	Alexander Thom	Chipstead	20	23	26	16	20	12	8	76	18	J,F
117	Michael Thompson	Crawley Mariners	26	15	24	4	34	7	32	76	18	V
179	Oliver Slight	Frensham Pond	5	12	28	29	3	42	36	77	20	J
626	Len Dean	Kingsmead	9	17	15	49	52	25	13	79	21	V
494	Nigel Milton	Frensham Pond	18	19	17	18	8	27	22	80	22	F
518	Robin Ballam	Crawley Mariners	27	18	9	11	27	20	27	85	23	V
718	Alison Stratford	Frensham Pond	22	52	30	17	17	22	12	90	24	L,F
625	Tony Best	Taplow Lake	19	28	14	28	25	8	28	94	25	V
63	Chris Robinson	Tamworth	25	7	34	35	33	19	24	108	26	
600	Steve Hill	Frensham Pond	17	25	22	22	24	50	52	110	27	
162	Matthew Bromley	Crawley Mariners	52	52	23	20	18	24	25	110	27	F
429	Ted Jefferies	Frensham Pond	15	35	35	40	19	26	19	114	29	V
323	Annette Walter	Welwyn	32	29	18	25	26	21	35	119	30	L,J,F
472	Geoff Sutton	Frensham Pond	29	27	21	32	35	18	26	121	31	
641	Paul Hinde	Middle Nene	39	31	25	38	32	29	9	126	32	
99	Paul Luttmann	Crawley Mariners	30	9	29	33	30	34	29	127	33	
424	Penny Vere	Upton Warren	52	52	41	26	36	33	4	140	34	L,V,F
152	Tony Reeve	Taplow Lake	35	33	39	27	14	39	52	148	35	V,F
242	Tom Allen	Crawley Mariners	52	52	27	31	37	30	31	156	36	J,F
209	Clive Chapman	Littleton	33	30	36	24	42	38	34	157	37	
713	Keith Bannister	Frensham Pond	38	41	33	21	52	32	52	165	38	F
673	George Stratford	Frensham Pond	31	52	42	37	29	47	30	169	39	F
43	Ann Hooper	Kennet Valley	41	34	32	43	31	46	33	171	40	L,F
575	Fiona Cauter	Chipstead	40	36	44	30	38	35	37	176	41	L,V
706	Joanne Lloyd	Littleton	34	38	31	34	48	44	42	179	42	L,F
601	Trish Moore	Staunton Harold	37	40	38	41	28	36	43	179	42	L
471	Colin Newton	Shearwater	52	52	37	36	39	31	39	182	44	V,F
27	Colin Boys	Frensham Pond	36	32	43	46	44	40	38	189	45	V,F
50	Diana Thompson	Crawley Mariners	43	39	40	39	48	37	41	196	46	L,V
399	Brian Thom	Chipstead	42	37	45	42	41	42	40	202	47	V
271	Stuart Sleight	Crawley Mariners	45	42	47	44	43	41	44	214	48	F
344	Nigel Boarder	Evesham	44	43	46	45	40	45	45	217	49	
361	Alan Browning	Frensham Pond	46	45	52	52	48	48	52	239	50	V,F
587	Anne Browning	Frensham Pond	48	52	52	52	52	52	52	256	51	L,V,F



Ted Jefferies (429) getting away in race 5 to take the lead



Heidi Dodd in action



Penny Vere (424) up with the leaders in race 7



Chris Ellis presenting the Team Trophy to Chipstead

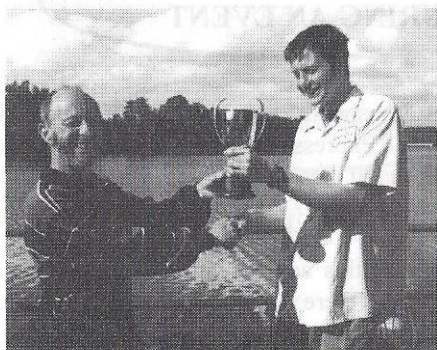


A massed start on the Saturday



Prizewinners:

Left to right: Richard Smallwood, Henry Jaggers, Robert Hamilton, Brian Welham, Heidi Dodd, Jake Sutton, Alex Reeve, Mark Wilkins, John Windibank and Nick Warren



Henry presenting the cup to Jake



Heidi Dodd
Lady Champion

BRIGHTLINGSEA S.C. AND THE TIDAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The club.

Brightlingsea Sailing Club lies about 10 miles to the West of Clacton, Essex. If you look on a map you will see that there is only one road to approach the town so the club, in Oyster Tank Road, is easy to find. The clubhouse overlooks the sailing water and has good showers, a galley for breakfasts, lunches and evening meals. There is a bar too.

Racing:

The club is situated near to the join of several river estuaries and this can lead to tricky tides for dinghy sailing. There is also a land mass behind the shore and there is often wind when it is lacking in other areas of the country. There is a huge slipway for launching and launching can be done at any state of the tide. We have ample power rescue boats available with radio link. Usually the start of races and one mark are near to the clubhouse.

Tidal Championships, Saturday/Sunday 25-26 July.

Please plan to arrive by 10am on the Saturday for a midday first race start. There is no entry form, entries will be taken on the day. If you plan to stay overnight an accommodation list will be sent to you on request.

Pyefleet Week.

As was mentioned in Perihelion 45 (pages 21 and 33), you may like to join in the points series for the rest of the week. If you are interested in doing this please ring one of the Brightlingsea numbers given opposite.

(Concocted by the Editor from a telephone conversation with Richard Kemp salt)

SAIL CHANGING DURING AN EVENT

During the recent Nationals at Frensham, I was having difficulties with the light wind setting of a very new sail and expressed my intention to use my older sail to another competitor. He thought that it was against the rules to change sails unless the one I started with was damaged.

On the last day I sought to verify this advice with two other members and in consequence as I now understand it, there is nothing in the class rules to prohibit sail changing. This supports my personal observation, in that I have seen top

helms performing a sail change between races in Open Meetings and also during this National Competition.

Can the Perihelion be used for a formal statement on the subject, so that we all are working with a uniform understanding of this subject.

Colin Boys (Comet 27, Frensham Pond S.C.)

Editor's note: There was only time for a quick 'phone call to Keith Lamdin about this. Keith's comment was to the effect that provided that the sails measure, you may change them unless this is prohibited by the sailing instructions or the Class Rules and he had never heard of sail changes ever being prohibited.

● FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JULY - SEPTEMBER 1998

<u>Date</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Sat 27 June	Merthyr Tydfil	WEST	Mark Govier	01222 778459
SUN 28 June	Hill Head	SOUTH	Gary Aiken	01489 574696
Sat 4 July	Combs	NORTH	Sue Pollard	01457 862694
Sat 11 July	Staunton Harold	NORTH	Mike Heaney	01332 574146
Sat 18 July	Cotswold	WEST	Bob Presley	01761 232487
SUN 19 July	Aylesbury	EAST	Mike Palmer	01296 436414
Sat/Sun	<u>TIDAL CHAMPIONSHIPS</u>		Richard Kempsalt	01206 304042
25-26 July	BRIGHTLINGSEA S.C.		Nigel Edmunds	01206 303009
Sat 8 August	Hampton Pier	EAST	Geoff Gambrell	01227 361156
Sat 22 August	Mudford	WEST	Peter Reid	01202 477281
Sat 12 Sept	Littleton	EAST	Martin Vinson	01483 538149
SUN 13 Sept	Arden	NORTH	Clive Marlow	01684 562808
SUN 20 Sept	Chew Valley	WEST	Errol Edwards	01179 354494
SUN 27 Sept	Pingewood	SOUTH	Alison Walker	01189 819974

● PERIHELION

The next issue of Perihelion will be circulated in September 1998. Contributions to me by the end of August please.

Alan Browning, Editor

BALLOT ON THE QUORUM QUESTION

Perihelion 46 gave the result of the Ballot on the quorum required at an AGM. It is interesting to see the returns received are practically the number who attend current AGMs. This leads one to wonder if vested interests are being expressed or am I just being a little presumptive? Maybe those returning ballot forms were not those who regularly attend the AGM, so I'm just guessing.

Yes, I did vote but I don't know if my ballot form arrived back in the tight deadline of just 14 days from the issue of the Perihelion involved or not. OK, I voted for lower quorum figure but there was no other option except Status Quo. Although I can see the reasoning for the reduction, maybe as in many other Organisational Constitutions we should be quoting a fixed figure instead of a percentage of the total membership. Thought for a future AGM ?

Turning to the second vote I am very concerned about the result, again if my vote counted then I was the 'I against'.

Why might you ask, well some food for thought:

How many of you have been members of the Comet Association from the beginning ?

How many of you have received every Perihelion issued ?

How many of you actually took trouble to look back at those issues you did have, to read the AGM decisions ?

How many of these issues actually carried all the details of the changes made to the measurement rules ?

How many of you understood these changes ?

What about those members who are comparatively new and have never received all the issues involved (like me) or have bought second hand Comets and not obtained all the documentation ?

There are so many imponderables and with all the good faith in which the retrospective alteration was being put to the members surely the Class Association could have arranged to publish or re-issue a set of the amended Measurement Rules and /or changes being put to the vote ?



I know the Measurement Rules are the prerogative of Andrew Simmons (the Builder) but the Constitution is the members. To my knowledge during my membership of the past 6/7 years I have had no complete update of the original rules from when I collected my Comet.

So my question is: 'how could the vast majority of members vote on something they were not able to comprehend fully in the 14 days given to respond?' Maybe those who did respond in the affirmative were those same few faithfuls or were members voting blindly! Maybe this is why the return was low.(less than 50 out of nearly 800 boats produced but obviously not all are Class members).

I am not knocking those faithful few who attend the AGM and take on all the thoroughly hard work on our behalf they are doing a tremendous task. I am just raising the subject to highlight a glaring deficiency when it comes to amending constitutions without full and thorough investigation before ballots are made and with a short duration to respond.

Have I made my point clear... if so when can we all have updated Measurement Rules and Class Constitution... please I do enjoy my Comet and all the fun and pleasure derived from racing and mixing with other Comet sailing fraternity but now and again a catalyst is necessary to keep the brain cells operating. Who will now shoot me down ?

John Regnard (Comet 534)

Editor's note: I feel sure that the Committee will respond to your letter.

COMET IDEAS IN PERIHELION

Good luck with the Newsletter. I enjoy reading it and particularly the many customising ideas many of which I have used long ago and some still do ... but I like to try them out. Similarly the top flyers comments on how they sail their Comets are put into practice some working well for me especially this past 18 months at Club level where I have been extremely successful in both class and handicap racing. These tips are worth taking note of... !!!

John Regnard (Comet 534, veteran 62 years old)

● SHEARWATER OPEN

The delightful setting of the 45 acre lake, deep in Longleat Estate forest surrounded by lawns and trees under a mainly sunny day, made the event a pleasant day out for contestants and spectators alike.

The event included the Topper Open Southwest Travellers & National Circuit racing at same time and course as the Comets. This provided some thrilling tactical manoeuvring to avoid the many 'rafting problems' at the turning buoys and capsizes, multiple in many instances with 28 boats on the water.

Twelve Comets took part with visitors from Cotswold, Merthyr Tydfil (2), Evesham, Middle Nene, Frensham and the host club Shearwater (6).

The sunny day with the occasional dark black cloud providing some very heavy squalls to contend with, had numerous boats capsizing. Yet, in the main it was the periods in between that the contestants had to worry about more as the wind frequently changed direction and strength by very large margins, due mainly to the large trees surrounding the Lake and the slight northerly breeze. Deflections from the trees provided those who read the wind shifts correctly large advantages and tacking on the shifts was the order of the day, at same time maintaining clear and clean air and staying upright. Many boats had some good planing spells and some hairy gybes which lead to some exciting spells amongst some doldrums. A real mixture of conditions throughout.

The first race was the closest with Jake Sutton taking the lead at the first mark closely followed by John Regnard, Paul Hinde & Nic Cross. As the race progressed these four opened up a good lead over the remainder of the fleet, eventually finishing in that order.

The second race had a course change with the first mark very close to the start line but a very heavy squall bore down on the fleet just before the gun, capsizing some and sorely affecting others. However, they all got away swiftly but some tactical manoeuvring at the mark had all the boats rounding onto starboard into the middle of the Lake whilst John Regnard coming from behind continued alone on port towards the bank picking up the wind deflection from the trees veering from behind. A quick tack onto starboard across the front of the fleet (except for Jake Sutton) by John had a domino effect on them all, but cannily it was a dummy and he went back onto port immediately, pulling clear of the fleet. By the top mark Jake, John and Colin Newton were well clear with Paul Govier in 4th place & Nic Cross in 5th. This pattern remained to the end with finishing order of Jake

1st, John 2nd and Colin, who had a magnificent race maintaining a very close 3rd place.

Jake had two first places and was untouchable whilst John had two seconds. The second place overall was still undecided between John, Colin and Paul, with tie break and count back possible and the outcome depending on the final race.

The third race had a further course change with the start across the whole Lake from the normal Club start line. John Regnard chose the far side of the Lake with Leon Ward, getting clean wind and with a short starboard tack followed by a port flyer across the front of the fleet he rounded the first mark along with Nic Cross who took a slight lead at the second mark but by the end of the first circuit John had a built a large lead which he extended throughout to win by a large margin. Nic Cross was 2nd and Robert Presley 3rd.

Overall placings:

	1	642	Jake Sutton	Frensham Pond
	2	534	John Regnard	Shearwater
	3	418	Nic Cross	Shearwater
	4	641	Paul Hinde	Middle Nene
	5	471	Colin Newton	Shearwater
	6	419	Paul Govier	Merthyr Tydfil
1 st lady:	395	Margaret Boyce	Shearwater	
1 st junior (u 16)	583	Nick Boers	Evesham	
1 st veteran:	534	John Regnard	Shearwater	

An enjoyable tea with cakes and sandwiches provided by the host club and prizegiving to the Comet & Topper Open Fleets completed an enjoyable day.

John Regnard (Comet 534)

FISHERS GREEN OPEN

Twenty four Comets gathered at Fishers Green on what was a fine Saturday to contest an Open event of three races with two counting toward a result. As the racing unfolded, the third race was to be needed to decide the overall result, there being just 5 points covering the first three boats.

The first race went to Mark Wilkins in *'In the Pink'* No. 657 closely followed by Jake Sutton sailing *'Basket Case'* No. 642, with Alex Reeve in 573 in third place. This trio, with a little interference from Henry Jagers *'Cats Whiskers'* No. 500 and Heidi Dodd in 314 were to more or less set the standard for the day.

The second race was won by Jake Sutton from Alex Reeve, with Henry Jagers just keeping out Heidi Dodd for third place, with Mark Wilkins in fifth place.

The final race was set with much to play for between this leading five boats. It was a close run race which went to Jake Sutton, beating Martin Vinson in No 549 (*Littleton S. C.*), with the third place this time going to Mark Wilkins, and Heidi Dodd gaining fourth.

The Fishers Green Open went to Jake Sutton with 2 points, Mark Wilkins was second with 4 points, Alex Reeve was third scoring 5 points Henry Jagers fourth with 8 points and Heidi Dodd was fifth, she also collected the 'First Lady Prize'.

The first Fishers Green helm was Amanda Pickard, guesting in 440 owned by Jo Nelmes and the 'First Junior' award went to Annette Walter in *'Satin Doll'* No.323 (*Welwyn G.C.S.C.*).

It was a splendid day of racing in very good conditions and it was particularly pleasing to note that all boats sailed every race!

Overall results:

1	642	Jake Sutton	Frensham Pond
2	657	Mark Wilkins	Chipstead
3	573	Alex Reeve	Taplow Lake
4	500	Henry Jagers	Staunton Harold
5	314	Heidi Dodd	Littleton

CHESTER OPEN

There was an excellent turn-out of 15 Comets for the first of the Northern Area Aphelion Trophy events for 1998 held on the river Dee at Chester on Saturday, 9th May. With visitors from Evesham, Staunton Harold and Redesmere Sailing Clubs coupled with a gusting moderate to fresh SW wind competitors and spectators were locked-in to an entertaining days sailing.

Phillip Hossel showed the way in the first race with a masterful demonstration of river sailing on a testing reaching course winning the race from Stuart Hadfield and Paul Hinde.

The Race Officers changed the course for the second race to provide two demanding additional beats in the middle of each lap. With the leading 8 boats rounding the third mark on the wrong side and not realising their error until they had rounded two subsequent marks all were disqualified for failing to unwind round the subsequent marks as they endeavoured to complete the race. The race was comfortably won by Henry Jaggers from Mike Smith and Keith Appleby.

With all to sail for in the final race on the same course Steve Heyes was in commanding form to take the race from Hadfield, Peter Hayes and Hossel.

Final Results: -

1	529	Stuart Hadfield	Chester
2	650	Phillip Hossel	Evesham
3	500	Henry Jaggers	Staunton Harold
4	331	Steve Heyes	Redesmere
5	670	Peter Hayes	Redesmere
6	641	Paul Hinde	Middle Nene

John Edwards (Comet 633)

CRAWLEY OPEN

At Hedgecourt Lake, 11 visitors (3 Chipstead; 3 Littleton; 2 Taplow; 2 Kingsmead and guess who from Coney) joined 16 home boats for Crawley Mariner's Comet Open on May 10 enjoying beautiful sunshine and close sailing. Wind Force 3, gusts 4, and occasional 5 kept everyone on their toes. The direction was easterly shifting 60° during racing.

First race: After an excellent start Guy Wilkins (Chipstead) led all the way with a continuous battle between Alex Reeve and Mark Wilkins (Chipstead) for 2nd and 3rd, Alex finishing just in front of Mark. A similar battle for 4th and 5th between Heidi Dodd and Martin Vinson (both Littleton). M. Spiers (Kingsmead) retired after an early capsizes due to a fellow Kingsmead sailor helping (or was it sabotage!) her rigging the night before! Julia Johnson (CMYC) retired after sailing the wrong course but was presented with a special 'course marker' at the end of the day to prevent this happening again.

Lunch was enjoyed by the sailors and helpers sitting outside the clubhouse in the warmth of the sun.

Second race: Again close with Alex Reeve 1st, Mark Wilkins 2nd, and after an exceedingly swift capsizes Heidi Dodd just finished 3rd with 4th Ian Beaumont.

Third Race: Postponed due to a wind shift and committee boat anchor drifting, the fleet were eventually away. Mark Wilkins retired after a premature start leaving Derek Coleman to lead all the way but with fierce gusts coming through there were a number of exciting thrills and spills for those contesting the places behind. Heidi and Alex both had setbacks with spectacular capsizes and 2nd place went to Brian Welham with Robin Ballam 3rd and Simon Thompson 4th.

Overall Results:

1	573	Alex Reeve	Taplow Lake
2	707	Derek Coleman	Coney
3	314	Heidi Dodd	Littleton
4	188	Simon Thompson	Crawley Mariners
5	711	Brian Welham	Taplow Lake
6	492	Ian Beaumont	Crawley Mariners

1st lady:	Heidi Dodd	Littleton
1st Over 60 :	Robin Ballam	Crawley Mariners
1st Under 18:	Tim Stevens	Crawley Mariners
1st Open :	Tom Allen	Crawley Mariners
Capsize Prize:	Paul Johnson	Crawley Mariners

GLOSSOP OPEN

In scorching sunshine and very light winds, ten boats took to the water at Glossop to contend the annual open event.

Once again we were pleased to welcome competitors from as far afield as Northamptonshire and Worcestershire as well as our more 'local' visitors.

The first race started with Steve Heyes, Comet 331, on port tack whilst everyone else opted for starboard. This put him in the lead at the first mark, followed closely by Henry Jagggers - Comet 500, Peter Hayes - Comet 670 and Phil Hossell - Comet 650. By the end of the first lap, Comet 500 had taken the lead from 331 and held it to the end, crossing the line ahead of 331, 670 and 650.

With a course set to cover the one and a quarter mile long reservoir, race 2 got underway quickly. Although Will Ablett led to the first mark, his lead was soon stolen by Comet 500 so that by the end of the first lap it was 500 followed by 670 and 331. The rest of this race was very much a procession with some light entertainment being provided by Tony Thomas in Comet 527 who put on a very good display of capsized drill! With 500 crossing the line ahead of 670, 331 and 650 the winner of the day was already decided, but second and third places were still up for grabs.

After lunch, with everyone weighed down (nobody was allowed to move until their plates were empty), the fleet was looking forward to the third and final race in what promised to be a freshening wind. The first lap saw Comet 650 ahead of 670, and 585 (Brian Herring). Throughout the second lap 650 and 670 were pretty well neck and neck with 331 putting in everything to catch up, but at the line it was 650 that took the honours followed by 670, 331 and 658 (Ros Stevenson).

Results:	1	500	Henry Jagggers	Staunton Harold
	2	670	Peter Hayes	Redesmere
	3	650	Phillip Hossell	Evesham
	4	331	Steve Heyes	Redesmere

Stuart Gilder. (Glossop & District S.C.)

RE-INTRODUCING ... CHEW VALLEY LAKE S.C.

Chew Valley Lake is a reservoir of about 1000 acres in size, located approximately six miles to the south of Bristol. The Chew Valley was flooded in the mid 1950's to improve the water supply to the city of Bristol. The reservoir was officially opened by the Queen in 1956.

Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club was founded in 1967. During its first two years the Club could only sail during the winter months, as fishing took precedence. A new club house was constructed in the early 1970's and this was officially opened by the Rt.Hon. Sir Dennis Howell M.P., the then Minister of Sport.

Today the Club has an impressive 550 members (the maximum that Bristol Water will allow) and has a lengthy waiting list. It boasts fleets of Lasers, Solos, Toppers and Flying Fifteens. Other classes sailed in abundance include Fireballs, Wayfarers and of course Comets. The Club has several National and World Champions, past and present from Solos, Lasers, Buzz, Topper and once almost the Comet ! (Editor's note: Errol was National Championship runner-up in 1993).

The Club House provides many facilities which include large changing rooms with hot showers, a galley with hot food and drink, a small chandlery and of course the essential bar.

The Comet Open meeting on Sunday, 20th September, will be held alongside the normal Club racing. This Sunday will be the first Sunday that the whole of the reservoir will be available at the end of the fishing season. The Comets will have their own start. Three races are planned with the two best results counting. The first race will be at approximately 11am.

How to get there:

From M4 Jnc. 19:

Turn onto the M32 into Bristol, then follow signs A38 Taunton/ Bristol Airport through Bristol. Once you have left Bristol on the A38, approx. 0.5 mile past the traffic lights turn left onto the B3130 for Chew Magna. Travel through the village of Winford and then just after the Esso garage turn right at the roundabout for Chew Stoke. At Chew Stoke turn right. After approx 150 yards turn left onto Wallycourt Road. After approx 0.3 mile the entrance to Chew Valley S.C. is on the right.

From M5 Inc.22.

Turn onto the A38 north to Churchill. Turn right onto the A368 towards Bath. Follow A368 to West Harptree and then turn left onto the B3114 towards Chew Stoke. At Chew Stoke take a right turning just after the pub on your left onto Wallycourt Road. The entrance to the Club is on your right after approx. 0.3 mile.

From A37.

Turn onto the B3130 for Chew Magna. Follow through Chew Magna village. Turn left at the end of village for Chew Stoke. At Chew Stoke, turn left onto Wallycourt Road and the Club entrance is on your right after approx. 0.3 mile.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible on this day. Please get in touch if you want any further details.

Errol Edwards. (Comet 334) Tel/Fax. 0117 9354494.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Something very strange occurred the other day. I was having an unusually quiet lunchtime at work and decided to clear out my purse, as women are wont to do occasionally. Tucked into the back of a dark corner was a little piece of paper with a telephone number on it. The number was Martin's (Vinson - my partner and fellow Comet sailor, for those not known to us) from nine years ago written down on the night we met and which I had kept for sentimental reasons - yes, hard to believe but even I can be sentimental at times! I quickly glanced at the number and thought aah, how sweet, and put it away again. Something however triggered a few moments later and I dug the piece of paper out again. The really spooky thing was that the number was 549314 which I realised were the numbers of Martin's Comet followed by the number of mine both of which had been bought sometime after we met.

Martin, like a true romantic, was quick to point out that his boat number was before mine, and yes, admittedly, it has been quite a few times this year.

Could this be a case for Mulder and Scully or just fate? - very strange, but very true. I am still trying to find out who put the idea into Norah's head that wedding bells might be in the air this year - heaven forbid!

Heidi Dodd (Comet 314, Littleton S.C.)

EDITOR'S NOTES

I am sorry that Perihelion 46 came to you later than expected. There was a problem with the printer after it had left my hands. It was to do with the quality of the cover, but they did a good job in the end.

Many thanks to the contributors this time, our Chairman, those who have written meeting reports and in particular John Regnard who has some thoughts on the quorum issue. . On top of that there is an article re-introducing Chew Valley, who have an open this year after a gap of two years, and an unusual item from Heidi Dodd. I must also thank Chris Ellis, the Commodore of my own club Frensham Pond, for the Nationals Report and for his great co-operation during the whole of the preparation for that event. He was determined that we should enjoy ourselves, and we did. Thanks too to the photographers, Liz Hossell for the photo on page 4 and three photos on page 10, Robin Graham of Frensham Pond S.C. for the photo of Heidi on page 10 and the massed start on page 11 and Anne Browning for the cover photo and the lower three on page 11. What would I do without them!

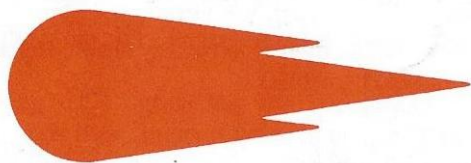
There is no "Talking to . . ." article this time. The chats I find very interesting and relaxed but afterwards they mean a large amount of time transcribing the tape recordings and I haven't the time to spare for that at the moment.

On the "Customizing your Comet" series I have at least one supporter (see page 15). In due course I will produce a booklet of customization ideas.

On the "Novices Club" idea there is now a (very) small group of us. Perhaps there should be a collective noun for us, maybe a "Class of Novices" or a "School of Novices" to reflect the fact that what we need is help from better sailors. When we have got together some areas where we need help, I might suggest to the Committee a training day for us. One problem has come up straight away: how do you rig a capsized standard Comet if you weigh only 8 stones?

What can I suggest for contributions next time ? I think the time is ripe for contributions on "Customizing your Comet" which do not come from Colin Boys or Keith Bullock. At National Championships I usually wander about among the boats to see what people do, but I probably miss some useful ideas.

Alan Browning, Editor



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association