



NEWSLETTER NUMBER 63
SUMMER 2002

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Front cover:

Ian Copenhall in action at the 2002 Association Championships.

(Photo: Andrew Simmons)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Already the end of May but it feels as if it has been wet and windy for ever here in Devon. Hopefully by the time you read this the weather will be more settled and we will all be basking in the sun - still with a good sailing breeze, of course!

Our programme is now well under way with eight of the open meetings and the Association Championships already behind us. This year I have not been quite so active as usual on the circuit so far - most venues take a lot longer to get to from here and with a new house and garden, etc.... - but I have been to four of the opens and the Association Championships and enjoyed some fine sailing and good company at each of them.

Shearwater was light but pleasant. Fishers Green was squally but very enjoyable sailing. Taplow was variable, not to say fickle, but dry for once and with some interesting gusts. And Sutton Bingham was excellent sailing though hard work, windy with very interesting gusts and absolutely stunning downwind legs! I hear that the meetings I could not get to - Rudyard Lake, Chester, Crawley, and Banbury - were equally successful and much enjoyed. So far the opens have attracted reasonable to very good turnouts, let's all do our best to ensure this continues throughout the season!

The two day Association Championships at Hampton Pier were another story! The weather forecast for the whole weekend was absolutely atrocious. We duly arrived late Friday afternoon after a slow and frustrating drive and installed ourselves at our adequate, if rather basic, hotel. We then off-loaded my boat at the club and spent a while in the club bar catching up with old friends and generally "chewing the fat" before looking for a meal. Norah and I eventually found a strangely upmarket Italian restaurant in Whitstable, and what an experience it was! I had better not give further details for fear of libel but the "entertainment" provided by the other diners (of which there were only about eight in a huge room) was memorable! Oh, the food and service were really excellent, too, if rather expensive.

Saturday dawned fine with the wind blowing Force 5 gusting 6 and two races on the programme. More Comets turned up and the club decided they would put some racing on over a "figure of eight" course close to the shore. All the Comet Duos, whose national championships it was and with whom we were sharing the weekend, decided they would not go out that day, so did I! However, eleven Comets did take to the water for a pretty shaky running start and many of them

survived over the full six laps. The second race was a repeat performance, again with frequent capsizes. It was a very entertaining spectator sport and with some Comet and all the Duo entrants not sailing there was a more than adequate beach party. Afterwards we spent a very happy evening in the clubhouse.

Sunday started bright and sunny but now with a forecast of Force 5 gusting 7 and a further three races to sail. I rigged but, sadly (or advisedly) decided not to risk it. However, the majority of the Comet entrants did sail and many were able to complete all three races. The course was similar to that used the previous day so we were again treated to a fine view of the proceedings from the shore. The forecast was if anything an underestimate and, with an offshore wind, spectators could watch the gusts racing across the surprisingly flat inshore water, where most of the course was set, towards the more distant waves which were at times a mass of white horses (and at other times totally obliterated by rain squalls). There were frequent and spectacular capsizes on all points of sailing but no breakages, no injuries, no drownings - infact nothing to laugh at at all. The watchers could only admire, and perhaps envy, the determination and skill of all those who sailed, and, over the whole event, there was surprisingly close competition for the first three places, too!

So, for those who sailed and for those who didn't, this year's Association Championships must be equally memorable. Our thanks to those who took part and especially to Hampton Pier for its race officer, rescue crews, and galley ladies.

This year, the Comet's 21st Birthday, I urge you all more than ever to do whatever you can to promote the Comet at your own clubs. This could involve as little as being seen out on the water as often as possible yourself and encouraging other club members and friends to have a brief try of your boat. Or you could perhaps hold a special Comet party, or even organise a Comet demonstration day and extend an invitation to other clubs in your area. It's still not too late to do something and if we could be of any help please get in touch.

Continuing the above theme, one of the best ways to support the class is to support the clubs which support us. That is, come to the open meetings and the National Championships! Peter Hayes (Comet 803) of Winsford Flash SC is determined to compete in all the events this year. He reckons that if he can get to venues right across the country then there is no excuse for you not to get to Winsford for the Nationals - and he's right! It promises to be a super event so let's see you all there!

Our AGM will be held on the 25th August at Winsford Flash SC during the Nationals. Please come and have your say. This year Derek Coleman will be

standing down as Treasurer after many years service but I am relieved to report we already have a volunteer to succeed him so long as you provide the necessary endorsement. Anyone else who would like to join the Committee or help in any way is urged to come forward.

Very Good Sailing to you all,

Henry Jagers, Chairman.



“Interesting gusts” at Hampton

NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE

1. Please note that Combs Sailing Club has had to cancel the Open meeting scheduled for June 15th. Our thanks go to Su Pollard for all the effort which she has put in over the years to arrange this event, especially as her work pattern has meant that she has usually been unable to sail on the day.
2. As this brings the number of qualifying events in the Northern Aphelion down to 4, the Committee proposes that the meeting at Cransley , on Sunday 11th August can be used towards either the Northern or Central Aphelions.

3. Ros Stevenson, the contact for the Nationals at Winsford Flash, has changed her 'phone number. **It is now 01606 591695.**
4. Nick Warren, the contact for Littleton, has moved house. His new address is on the inside cover of Perihelion, and his new telephone number is **01189 773110**
5. There has been no further response to the "Try a Comet" idea, but the Committee hopes that you will take every advantage, especially at club Open days, to promote the Comet.
6. You may have noted comments in Yachts and Yachting on the state, and status, of classes. It was noted that, although there were 40+ entries for the Nationals, only a handful of new boats were sold during the year. We feel that this indicates that, as a Class Association, we must be doing something right! However, we do rely on you, the sailors, to make a success of any events which are arranged.
7. We are aware that it continues to be difficult to find a second-hand Comet. There is a valid argument for considering a new boat if you are looking at paying £1500+ for a previously owned one. Most second-hand boats will need some replacement bits – even a new sail – which will bring the cost within range of a new boat.
8. Don't forget that Mudeford Week will have Comet class racing on the menu. It's a fun event, in a safe, tidal area, and it starts on 27th July with our Open meeting.
9. Looking ahead to next year, the Nationals will be at Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Last year this venue, which we will again be sharing with all of the Comet family, proved popular with helms. Although it is not so good for spectators, there is plenty for families to do in the area. The academy expects to be in their new, purpose-built accommodation by August 2003, which will hopefully include improved catering facilities.

Norah Jagers Class Secretary

● ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT

On Saturday and Sunday 25th & 26th May Hampton Pier Yacht Club (Herne Bay) held the Comet Tidal Championship 2002 and the Comet Duo National Championships. Saturday morning brought a force 5 to 6 West to South Westerly wind, with a forecast of it set in for the day. The race officer set a short figure of eight inshore course with 6 laps and a line start; with a run to the first mark, a beat back to the hook mark and then tack round and through the line. Due to the weather conditions the Comet Duos had decided not to sail on the Saturday.

Race 1

10 Comets and one Comet Mino lined up for the start of the first race and it was obvious before they started that there was going to be some exhilarating and exiting racing. With a run down to the first mark and with the wind gusting several boats were caught unawares and within moments of the start there were several capsize. Four boats, including the Comet Mino of Diana Thompson headed for the shore and an early retirement.

Chris Robinson and Ian Coppenhall took an early lead and by the end of the first lap had pulled ahead of their nearest rivals by over 1 minute. These two boats had some very close racing with positions changing frequently throughout the race, but they always managed to stay ahead of the rest of the pack.

During lap 2 a very large black cloud seemed to be heading straight for the course, luckily those on the water only caught the edge of it, although it definitely brought a squall through with it, increasing the wind strength and whipping up the waves. Further down the order of sailing Michael Thompson and John Windibank were having some close racing, with Michael just creeping around the hook mark, at the end of lap 2, to pull ahead of John. John just misjudged the wind and tide on the hook mark a couple of times during the race, clipped the mark with the end of his boom and had to do turns, which were not easy in the weather conditions.

During laps 4 & 5 Chris Robinson managed to pull away from Ian Coppenhall by 40 seconds and looked like hanging on to the lead until the end. However Ian pulled ahead again and coming up to the final hook mark was in the lead. Unfortunately he just clipped the mark, forcing him to do a 360 degree turn, allowing Ian to sail past and cross the line in first position. So it was Chris first, Ian second and Simon Thompson third. Considering the weather it is worth giving the other finishers a mention: Peter. Hayes, Michael Thompson, John Windibank and John Coppenhall in that order.

Race 2

On Saturday after lunch race 2 was run around a similar course, except the inshore Easterly mark was moved a further 200 yards from the shore. The course was again a figure of eight course, 6 laps with similar wind conditions to the morning. The tide was now going out, so the beat back from the East mark was against the tide and wind. This time there were 8 Comets and one Mino starting and there were a number of capsizes before the start.

Chris Robinson had the best start, followed by Michael Thompson & John Coppenhall. However, on the beat back from the East mark Ian Coppenhall took the lead, followed by Chris Robinson and then Simon Thompson. John Windibank had capsized on the first leg and retired after being in the water some time. During lap 2 the positions changed frequently between Chris, Ian and Simon. There was a capsize on this lap by Pete Hayes.

On lap 3 the first three boats, Ian, Coppenhall, Simon Thompson and Chris Robinson had established a good lead over the rest of the boats. Peter Hayes and John Coppenhall both capsized on this lap going through the line. Also there seemed to be some tactics going on with some boats staying out to sea and others coming inshore out of the tide. The Comet Mino of Diana Thompson was doing well and although she was well behind the Comets she was at least staying upright! By lap 4 Simon had established a good lead, followed by Ian and Chris. At this point the race officer decided not to prolong the race, most boats having capsized at least once and shortened to 5 laps for the Comets and 4 for the Mino. Coming up to the final hook mark before the finish Simon and Ian were racing neck and neck and desperately trying to gain the edge. Ian misjudged a tack and fell out of the boat but he very quickly righted it; however this minor error allowed Simon to edge ahead, round the hook mark and cross the line in first place. Final positions in this race were Simon, Ian, Chris, Michael Thompson, Peter Hayes and John Coppenhall.

With 2 races gone the championship was still open, however the same boats finished in the top 3 places in both races. Diana Thompson was also in a good position having been the only Mino to compete today. It was hoped that would see a change in the weather, a few more boats on the water and some racing for the Comet Duos.

Sunday dawned and the wind seemed to have eased slightly, however by 9.00 a.m. it was obvious that sailing conditions were going to be similar to that of Saturday. The Comet Duos decided to sail and prepared for an exiting day.

Race 3 (Race 1 for the Comet Duos)

The race officer set a similar course to that of Saturday and kept the racing inshore, whether this was for the benefit of the sailors, or so that the spectators could view some spectacular capsizes we shall never know!

Ten Comets and one Mino set off in the first race, Paul Hinde and Ian Coppenhall having the best starts. Again there were several capsizes during the race and by the end of lap 1 the first 3 positions were taken again, by Ian, Chris and Simon, and they managed to stay at the front for most of the race. As the race progressed heavy black clouds came in to view and very gusty weather forced further capsizes and the retirement of 5 boats, including the lone Mino of Diana Thompson. With continuing gusts coming through, the remaining six boats completed 6 laps of the course, with the first three finishers coming in nearly 10 minutes ahead of their nearest rivals. Final positions: Ian Coppenhall first, Simon Thompson second and Chris Robinson third.

Six Duos signed on for their first race of the day; starting 5 minutes after the Comets around the same course. Barry Noble & Mike Gauntlett capsized their boat early and did not make the start and Frank Smith & Colin Wild also had problems, they scraped over the Hampton rocks and also failed to start. Within the first lap most of the other boats had also capsized at least once. Geoff Gambrell & Simon Govier limped in to the shore by the fishing club, reefed their main sail and tried again, but soon capsized once more and took early retirement. The only Comet Duo to complete the 4 laps of the course was that of John Linnell who was sailing his boat single-handed.

Race 4 (Race 2 for the Comet Duos)

The wind seemed to be easing for this race, although it was only an illusion as the gusts soon returned as the race progressed. The race officer again left the course the same as the previous 3 races and he set the boats off on 6 laps of the course. Chris Robinson and John Windibank were early capsizes in a race in which Ian Coppenhall once again took an early lead. He maintained this lead throughout the race, despite being pushed by Pete Hayes and Simon Thompson. The weather worsened as squally rain came over in lap 4 and the race officer shortened the race at 5 laps. Final positions were 1st Ian, 2nd Pete Hayes and 3rd Simon Thompson, in a race in which all 8 starters completed the course.

Four Duos also started this race, setting off 5 minutes after the Comets. Rod Mount and John Dixon, who had not managed the previous race after having stones stuck in their centreboard casing, took an early lead and managed to stay out in front almost to the end of the race. Eventually they were overtaken by the single handed Duo of John Linnell. There was some close racing between these two boats and the boats of Frank Oliver & Frank Smith and Barry Noble & Mike

Gauntlett. With the wind again gusting and threatening to capsize these four competitors, the race officer shortened the course to 2 laps. Final placings through the finish line were Linnell, Mount/Dixon and Noble/Gauntlett. The Duos decided amongst themselves that they had experienced enough swimming and did not go out for the final race of the day.

Race 5

After a break for lunch the course was left the same as the morning for the 8 Comets and the lone Mino that lined up for the final race of the weekend. The wind was still very gusty and had gone almost Southerly and the tide had started to ebb. Diana Thompson in her Mino competed well in the first part of the first lap keeping up well with the Comets. However after a capsize in lap 2 she retired and headed back to the shore. There was some very close racing between Ian Copenhall and Chris Robinson, with Chris just gaining the edge at the end of each lap. At one point, as Ian came through the line, his boat submarined and filled up with water, he was seen standing up in the boat and kicking the water out with his foot, whilst desperately trying to catch up with Chris.

Several boats retired in the early laps, leaving just four boats to complete the 6-lap course. Most competitors capsized several times; many of these capsizes were spectacular and good entertainment for the watching crowd in the clubhouse. Final order in this race, were Ian, Chris, Pete Hayes and Simon Thompson.

There was a fairly obvious overall winner of the day, however the race officer and Comet Association had much deliberation over the split for 2d and 3rd positions.

At the end of the day's racing Club Commodore Terry Taunton thanked all the visitors for taking part and giving such wonderful entertainment to the spectators. He also apologised for the weather conditions and congratulated all the competitors on their stamina. He then presented prizes as follows.

Comets

Comet Association chairman Henry Jagers thanked the club for hosting the event and presented a gift to the club of an engraved boat, with a clock inset into the sail. Class association secretary Norah Jagers then announced the prizewinners. As the only Comet Mino competitor Diana Thompson from Crawley Mariners Y.C. becomes Comet Mino Champion for 2002

Comet National Champion for 2002 is Ian Copenhall. Runner-up Simon Thompson and 3rd Chris Robinson. Richard Smallwood, who took overall 8th position, was presented with the Ancient Mariner trophy.

Simon Govier Hampton Pier Yacht Club

ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

			Races:					Pts	
			1	2	3	4	5		
1	636	Ian Copenhall	Hunts	2	2	1	1	1	5
2	188	Simon Thompson	Crawley Mariners	3	1	2	3	4	9
3	63	Chris Robinson	Burghfield	1	3	3	4	2	9
4	670	Peter Heyes	Winsford Flash	4	5	6	2	3	14
5	532	John Copenhall	Hunts	7	6	4	5	5	20
6	117	Michael Thompson	Crawley Mariners	5	4	5	7	9	21
7	700	John Windibank	Chipstead	6	9	13	6	9	30
8	565	Richard Smallwood	Frensham Pond	11	9	10	8	9	36
9	641	Paul Hinde	Naseby	11	13	10	13	13	47
10	585	Brian Herring	Winsford Flash	13	13	10	13	13	49
11	247	Barry O'Herlihy	Chipstead	11	13	13	13	13	50
12	500	Henry Jaggers	Staunton Harold	13	13	13	13	13	52
1	50	Diana Thompson	Crawley Mariners	2	1	2	2	2	7

Association Champion: Ian Copenhall

Runner-up: Simon Thompson

First Ancient Mariner: Richard Smallwood

**Committee Prize): Chris Robinson
(for the most improved sailor)**

Mino Champion: Diana Thompson

Note: On the day, 26th May 2002, the sailing instructions specified scoring by Appendix A9 of the 2001-2004 Racing Rules of Sailing and tie-breaking by Appendix A8. This was of course before the changes that were made on 31st May 2002.

FIRST SIX AT THE OPEN MEETINGS

NORTHERN AREA

Rudyard Lake

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	352	T Raine
3	100	S Bellamy
4	730	B Herring
5	532	J Coppenhall
6	633	J Edwards

EASTERN AREA

Chester

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	352	T Raine
3	532	J Coppenhall
4	730	B Herring
5	803	P Hayes
6	488	E Coppenhall

EASTERN AREA

Fishers Green

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	427	M Coppenhall
3	188	S Thompson
4	117	M Thompson
5	650	P Hossell
6	803	P Hayes

EASTERN AREA

Crawley Mariners

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	323	A Walter
3	188	S Thompson
4	700	J Windibank
5	711	B Welham
6	518	R Ballam

WESTERN AREA

Shearwater

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	800	H Jagers
3	518	R Ballam
4	420	A Bevan
5	534	J Regnard
6	724	R Lemmon

WESTERN AREA

Sutton Bingham

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	803	P Hayes
3	419	P Govier
4	532	J Coppenhall
5	460	M Govier
6	800	H Jagers

SOUTHERN AREA

Taplow Lake

1	188	S Thompson
2	711	B Welham
3	518	R Ballam
4	750	R Smallwood
5	800	H Jagers
6	323	A Walter

SOUTHERN AREA

Banbury

1	636	I Coppenhall
2	620	A Bennett
3	532	J Coppenhall
4	518	R Ballam
5	801	A Best
6	622	C Chapman

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

● THOUGHTS ON CHEATING

You will probably have seen the recent comments by Paul Henderson, president of the International Sailing Federation where he has called for action on cheating. Mr Henderson said that cheating is rampant, with sailors wearing weighted clothing where extra weight is an advantage, and using pumping and rocking to gain extra speed.

Mr. Henderson was talking about Olympic sailing. Should we be concerned if cheating happens at club and class association level? If it does, how should it be addressed?

As with any umpiring or policing, the responsibility starts with the competitor. Does your boat conform to the measurement rules laid down by the builder? Once on the water, do you take penalties – or do you hope that no-one noticed that infringement, however minor? After all, you only brushed that mark.

Pumping and rocking may be difficult to see when on the water. From the shore it may be easier to notice that some helms appear to have ants in their pants while others remain still. However, the rockers and rollers must be aware of what they are doing.

I'm not advocating a change in Comet practice, where protests are the exception, not the rule. It always seems a bit pathetic to have won races on protest or by "playing the rules". All I am suggesting is that everyone takes a look at themselves and asks the question "do I play fair". And I already know that the answer for most Comet helms is "YES"

Ben Ainslie has said that he feels that the problems at Olympic level result from a lack of umpires. Surely, at that level, helms should live and breathe every rule in the game. I feel that it is a sad reflection on personal morality if top helms feel that the only way that they can win, is by cheating.

Norah Jagers Class Secretary

Editor's comment: Since 1989 I have shot some hours of video of Comet sailing in all kinds of winds and have been most impressed by the top helms' ability in boat control in strong winds. In light winds I am not so impressed, I will say no more, but some even rocked their way past the clubhouse at a Pingewood open!

THE 2002 AGM

THE 2002 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held at Winsford Flash Sailing Club

On Sunday 25th August 2002

At 18.30 hrs, or 1 hour after the end of the last race, whichever is later.

Motions must be received, in writing and duly seconded, by the Secretary, no later than 28th July 2002

Provisional Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2001 AGM held on 26th August 2001
3. Reports by Officers
4. Builder's Report
5. Adoption of Accounts
6. Consideration of Motions
7. Election of Officers and Committee
8. Appointment of Auditor
9. Any Other Business

The AGM is **YOUR** meeting: **YOUR** opportunity to have **YOUR** say in how the Association is run: **YOUR** chance to tackle the Committee about decisions made on **YOUR** behalf.

It is also the time when the Association takes stock of what has happened over the previous year and looks at plans for the next.

Please come and have your say.

Norah Jagers
Class Secretary

PROBABLY THE MOST FAMOUS COMET OF ALL



Yes, another Comet. This one is of course the de Havilland DH 106 Comet, the first jet airliner in the world. Powered by four jet engines, it was designed to carry 36 passengers in luxury, in a pressurised cabin, and flying at a height of 5 miles. At the time it was renowned for the smoothness of its flight and also, like our Comet, for its good looks.

The Comet mark 1 made its maiden flight in July 1949, fourteen were ordered by the British airline BOAC and by May 1952 the fleet was ready for services to Johannesburg, South Africa. All went well for six months and other routes were opened, to Singapore, Colombo and Tokyo. However, in early 1953 there were several accidents on take-off and later that year one blew up in the air. After a second Comet was lost in this way in January 1954 flights were suspended but were soon resumed. Then in April a third Comet blew up and the fleet was grounded. Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered an investigation to find, at any cost, the cause of the crashes and when I began my career at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough in September 1954 this was in full swing. Within six months a weakness had been found in the Comet fuselage, the pressurisation at high altitude did the rest.

The Comet was thoroughly modified by de Havillands to cure the problem and the new design reappeared in BOAC in 1958 as the Comet 4b, in time to make the first transatlantic flight by a jet airliner. Comets then continued in service with BOAC for another 22 years, not on transatlantic routes but on the routes requiring shorter legs, for which they were originally designed.

A version of the Comet, named the Nimrod, was later used by the RAF for anti-submarine work.

Editor.

I am beginning to run out of ideas for this series of Comet vehicles ("good thing" I hear some members say). I have one for the next issue, and one I saw but was not quick enough to photograph (both land vehicles), but I welcome ideas from members too. I am aware of a Comet cruising yacht, one belonged to a friend of Anne's, but their marriage broke up and we've lost touch.

● 2002 PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Once again it's competition time with fifty pounds cash to be won! The rules are very simple and, as I know so many of you are already keen photographers or at least take snap-shots, we expect a good entry.

Purpose - To produce photos for us to use and/or publish in any way and without charge for the good of the Association.

Entry - Free and open to all members, their families and friends. Send as many as you like.

Prizes - A first prize of £15 and runner's-up prize of £10 will be awarded in each of the categories "Comet Racing" and "Comet Fun".

The judging panel to be appointed by the Chairman. Judges will not be eligible for prizes.

Closing date and address for entries - Entries should be received by 20th September, please. All photos submitted to Perihelion are entered automatically. Alternatively send to Henry Jagers.

As in previous years, the definitions of "Racing" and "Fun" are up to you, but please send us your photos. Even if you don't win a cash prize, you just might have the pleasure of seeing your shot published in Perihelion or on display at an exhibition!

● FORTHCOMING EVENTS

29th JUNE -1st OCTOBER 2002

<u>Date</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Sat 29 June	Redditch	CENTRAL	Bob Willis	01527 459852
SUN 7 July	Naseby	CENTRAL	George Parry	01162 772449
SUN 14 July	Aylesbury	SOUTH	Scott Carter	01442 875627
Sat 20 July	Redoubt	EAST	Jeff Clarke	01303 813213
SUN 27 July	Mudford	WEST	Mike Roach	01202 477553
Sat 3 Aug	Carsington	NORTH	Keith Appleby	01332 840612
Sat 10 Aug	Frensham Pond	SOUTH	<u>Keith Bannister</u>	<u>01252 724134</u>
SUN 11 Aug	Cransley	CENTRAL	Bill Webster	01536 725918
Sat-Mon	<u>NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS</u>			
25 - 27 Aug	<u>WINSFORD FLASH.</u>			<u>01606 591695</u>
			Ros Stevenson	
Sat 7 Sep	Severn	CENTRAL	Steve Hawley	01905 458636
Sat 8 Sep	Arden	WEST	Clive Marlow	01684 562808
Sat 21 Sep	Littleton	EAST	Nick Warren	<u>01189 773110</u>
SUN 22 Sep	Pingewood	CENTRAL	Keith Taylor	01189 814933
SUN 30 Sep	Merthyr Tydfil	WEST	Mark Govier	01222 778459

It is wise to check with the contact that the event is taking place. Differences from earlier lists are shown underlined in bold.

● PERIHELION

The next issue will be circulated in September 2002. Contributions to me by the 24th August please. Yes, I know that's before the Nationals, but this time I've got to get most of the editing done before the end of the month. If I am sent the Nationals results and report very promptly I may be able to fit them in, but I can't promise.

Editor.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002

This year's Championships are to be held on 24th - 26th August at Winsford Flash Sailing Club in Cheshire. The programme for the event and the accommodation list are enclosed, together with a location map. Camping facilities are available, the number to ring for this is 01606 558475.

The first race starts at 1.00p.m on the Saturday, with other races to follow.

The club is very nice, very friendly and has very comfortable facilities for family and friends watching the event. Hope you will all come and visit us.

Ros Stevenson

For any other information please ring:

Ros Stevenson	01606 591695
Brian Herring	01625 861006
Winsford Flash S C	01606 592726.



The clubhouse, completed in 1990, has a large clubroom, spacious changing rooms with showers, a bar with lounge area and a well-equipped galley.

TAPLOW LAKE OPEN

An exciting finish

Fourteen competitors from six different clubs took part in the Comet Open meeting at Taplow Lake in Berkshire on 4th May. This year there was one of the most exciting finishes seen at the event for some years. Robbie Hamilton had already achieved a win and a second place in the first two races, while Brian Welham had a win and a third place, both of them being members of the host club. So, when the two of them entered the final beat of the final race in the lead, almost alongside each other, the tension rose. Brian was half a length behind, so tacked repeatedly in an attempt to escape Robbie's cover, but Robbie was equally adept at maintaining his advantage. Then just as they neared the finish line, Simon Thompson of Crawley Mariners slipped through, almost unnoticed until then, to cross the line first, followed within seconds by Robbie and Brian in that order. Simon had previously achieved a 2nd and 4th place in the first two races, so when the discards were taken into account, he and Robbie had scored the same number of points, but as the last result takes precedence, he achieved the overall victory.

By contrast, the first two races had proved rather processional. In the first race, Brian Welham soon established a commanding lead in winds that were not strong, but very twitchy, varying by 45 degrees almost every minute. Picking the shifts became the name of the game. The minor places were fought out between Robbie Hamilton, Richard Smallwood, Simon Thompson and Robin Ballam, who eventually finished in that order. Henry Jagers and Tony Best made brief forays into the leading group, but fell behind at the end.

In the second race, Robbie Hamilton, led virtually all the way, benefitting from clear winds, while Simon Thompson, Robin Ballam and Chris Robinson disputed dominance of the following group, joined towards the end by Brian Welham, who fought his way through to third. The main point of interest to spectators was a closely fought battle for last place between Daniel Waygood and Mark Taylor, both of the host club. Daniel eventually forced Mark on to the wrong side of the finishing mark, to much applause, proving that open meetings can provide close and enjoyable racing for competitors at all levels, not just the tigers at the front.

In the third race, lighter and steadier winds brought other competitors into the reckoning, including 19-years-old Annette Walter, Derek Coleman and Henry Jagers. Brian Welham had a momentary lead, but took a 720 degree penalty for hitting a mark, so that Annette Walter took the lead for a couple of laps, until she

fell into a lull, which enabled Robbie Hamilton, Simon Thompson and Brian Welham to close up and eventually overtake her. Annette finished a creditable 4th, with Henry Jagers and Robin Ballain 5th and 6th.

The overall results were as follows:

1	188	Simon Thompson	Crawley Mariners
2	150	Robbie Hamilton	Taplow Lake
3	711	Brian Welham	Taplow Lake
4	518	Robin Ballam	Crawley Mariners
5	750	Richard Smallwood	Frensham Pond
6	800	Henry Jagers	(unattached)
7	323	Annette Walter	Welling Garden City
8	63	Chris Robinson	Burghfield
9	801	Tony Best	Taplow Lake
10	707	Derek Coleman	Coney
11	562	Simon Jackson	Taplow lake
12	611	Phil Walter	Welyn Garden City
13	676	Mark Taylor	Taplow Lake
14	138	Daniel Waygood	Taplow Lake (sailed one race)

Robin Ballam won the "Ancient Mariners" prize;

Tony Reeve

● SCUTTLEBUT EUROPE

Scuttlebut Europe is a sailing newsletter which will be published and distributed each weekday via email.

If you want to know more, go to:

<http://www.scuttlebutteurope.com>

If you've got the time, they've got the information!

Norah Jagers

CHESTER OPEN

There was an excellent turnout of 13 Comets for the Northern Area Aphelion Trophy event held on the river Dee at Chester on 11th May. With visitors travelling from Congleton, Peterborough and Carsington competitors were faced with testing fresh north westerly winds which provided an entertaining day for participants and spectators alike.

Numerous capsizes featured in the opening race which was dominated by Ian Coppenhall who showed excellent river skills to win from Tom Raine and Peter Hayes.

The Race Officer changed the course for the second race as the wind moved to the West. Mike Raine then entered the fray in a borrowed boat and proceeded to carve out a useful lead in the blustery conditions to win from Ian and Peter.

With all to sail for in the third race on the same course, Mike Raine showed his class to win convincingly from Ian Coppenhall with John Coppenhall in third place.

Final Results :-

1	762	Mike Raine	Rudyard Lake
2	636	Ian Coppenhall	Hunts
3	352	Tom Raine	Rudyard Lake
4	532	John Coppenhall	Hunts
5	730	Brian Herring	Winsford Flash
6	803	Peter Hayes	Winsford Flash

John Edwards (Comet 633)



"On the first beat"



Pizewinners: (l to r) Tom and Mike Raine, Ian Coppenhall,
John Coppenhall, Brian Herring

2001 AGM MINUTES

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy Sunday 26th August 2001

The meeting was attended by about 30 members of the association, and the builder.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Keith Lamdin, Anne and Alan Browning, Jack Thompson, Ann Hooper, Debbie Degge, Phil Walters, Annette Walters, Mark Wilkins, Emma Coppenhall, Mark Coppenhall, Ian Coppenhall, Brian Welham, Tony Best, Chris Weston.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 30th April 2000:

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed and signed. Proposed by John Edwards. Seconded by Roger Lemmon

3. Reports by Officers:

The Chairman, Henry Jagers,

Henry welcomed members to the meeting and thanked Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy for making accommodation available for the Annual General Meeting.

Henry thanked all of the members of the committee: Alan Browning for producing an outstanding newsletter; Derek for keeping tabs on the Association's expenses and membership; Nick and Paul for organising the stands for the shows; John for acting as Auditor; Tony for the excellent website; Phil for collating the results and Liz for her inspiration when buying trophies. Henry said that Phil and Liz would both be hard acts to follow. However, Paul had been in training for working out the results for some time and was "raring to go" , and a volunteer had come forward to take on the task of organising the trophies.

Henry extended his thanks for the support given by members in a variety of ways, such as sending articles to Perihelion, manning stands at the shows, talking "Comet" at their clubs, coming to Comet events and helping to arrange meetings.

He noted that the number of people attending meetings has stayed reasonably constant, and he thanked the 'regulars' on the circuit as well as those who attended their local Open and Aphelion meetings. This year the numbers at Open meetings

had been enhanced by the Coppenhall fleet, to whom Henry extended special thanks.

Henry closed by thanking Norah for keeping him in order, and invited members to join them for a drink in the bar after the meeting.

The Secretary, Norah Jagers, thanked everyone for their good wishes on her marriage to Henry and their move to Devon.

She thanked all of the clubs who have hosted Comet events this year and acknowledged the enthusiastic welcome which Middle Nene and Cransley have given to the Class , and looked forward to the meeting at Severn .

Norah apologised for having rearranged the programme following the cancellation of a number of events early in the season because of foot and mouth disease. She was pleased that the affected clubs had been able to reinstate all of the events.

When arranging the programme it has become apparent that in some clubs, their attitude in respect of holding a Comet event is governed by the fleet status of the Comet at that club.

The secretary said that she has not noticed many reports of events in Dinghy Trader, and urged clubs to send information in as soon as possible after an Open meeting.

The secretary asked for feed back on these Championships, and said that the venue for next year has yet to be confirmed

The Results Officer, Phillip Hossell gave a short resume of the period since the last AGM in April 2000.. John Challenger regained his National Championship title and also convincingly won the Association Trophy. Debbie Degge became the 2000 Ladies Champion.

In the 2000 Orbital and Aphelions, overall numbers attending the Open Meetings were down compared with the 1999 figures. The Orbital Trophy was won by Henry Jagers for the second time, 9 years after his original win. Henry also won the Northern Aphelion. Believe it or not, it was Henry's first ever Aphelion. In fact all of the winners of the areas were for the first time. Brian Welham took the Southern Aphelion, Paul Govier won the West, Annette Walter took the East whilst Ian Coppenhall began his current sequence of domination by winning the Central area. Full facts and details were available in Perihelion No.57.

The fixture listing had been disrupted somewhat with the outbreak of foot and mouth disease causing 4 meetings to be postponed from April and May . Norah had done an excellent job in ensuring that these fixtures were rescheduled. Banbury had been held during the previous week, whilst Sutton Bingham, Shearwater and Chester were all due to take place in September. Norah also persuaded Pingewood to hold an open meeting , again in September, as Redoubt and Cotswold had both withdrawn after the programme had been finalised.

So far this year, Ian Coppenhall had won the Association Trophy and everything else that he had entered. So it was now left to the rest of the helms to fight for 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc.

Phillip reminded his audience that he and Liz were retiring from the Committee and thanked everyone for their support over the previous 6 years, ever since John Windibank had a quiet word with him, asking for help with the Western and Northern areas. It had been an enjoyable time, and Phillip thanked John for roping him, and Liz, in. Both he and Liz thanked all of the committee members for their support and encouragement.

Newsletter Editor, Alan Browning apologised in his report for not being at the meeting, and thanked everyone for their contributions during the year. There had been many unsolicited contributions which had been most welcome.

Alan particularly wished to thank Phil Hossell for his consistently excellent presentation of the results, both meeting by meeting and the annual analyses, and Tony Ellison for his continued first class effort running the Comet Association website. Many second-hand Comets have now been sold through it.

The Editor's experimental "Rivals Competition" had been very encouraging, perhaps satisfying "Old and Fat" (see the article "Equal Rights for All" in Perihelion 40, page 14) who suggested that something be done for the lower members of the fleet. Alan would welcome any suggestions for improvement, particularly in ways of increasing the interest in group B by allowing more sailors into it.

Communications to the Newsletter Editor can be done by e-mail and FAX, but this is a slow way, because he doesn't have the equipment himself and usually only remembers to ask his daughter if anything has come in when a deadline is imminent! In particular, the last digital stage of the e-mail journey is by car on 3.5" floppy disks, so large storage photographs cannot come that way. They can, however, be printed at the receiving computer which is probably good enough.

4. Builders Report:

Andrew apologised for having missed the last AGM., and expressed his pleasure at seeing so many people at the Nationals. He said that there had not been many enquiries for the Comet, which is 20 years old this year, and that dinghies are available from stock .

He proposed having a Mino rig at Southampton Boat Show to ensure that the boat won't blow over. He has a smaller stand at the London Boat Show, and will not have a Comet on display for the first time in 18 years. Andrew thought that Comets had a good presence at the 2000 Sailboat, with the Association having a stand away from that of Comet Dinghies.

Andrew noted that there appears to be a lack of "fun sailors", and said that he was pleased that the Comet Class Association continues to organise and support such a high number of events.

5. Adoption of Accounts:

The Treasurer, Derek Coleman, spoke to the accounts which were adopted by the meeting. Proposed by Brian Herring. Seconded by John Windibank.

6. Consideration of Motions:

a) The motion

"That the method of securing the outhaul on a Comet be optional, and allow a piece of track (suggest 12") to be fixed to the top of the boom, this would "tidy up" the end of the boom, and be safer to de-rig in an emergency."

Proposed by Keith Bullock, Comet 300, Seconded by Len Dean, Comet 626, was debated at length. The meeting felt that the proposed modifications would compromise the Comet's one-design status unless all boats were adapted, and that there were a number of safety issues involved. In a vote there were no votes in favour of the motion

7. Election of Officers:

Liz and Phillip Hossell resigned from the Committee after giving valued service in the organisation of the Association. The Chairman presented Liz with a bowl and Philip with an engraved tankard in recognition of their time on the Committee.

Ros Stevenson agreed to become trophy buyer. Proposed by Brian Herring, seconded by Roger Monks.

The rest of the Committee was prepared to serve for a further year, and were elected en bloc.

The Committee is:

Chairman	Henry Jagers	
Treasurer	Derek Coleman	
Secretary	Norah Jagers	
Committee	Alan Browning	(Newsletter)
	Paul Hinde	(Results)
	Nick Warren	
	Ros Stevenson	(Trophies)

8. Appointment of Auditor:

John Edwards was appointed as Auditor. Proposed by Derek Coleman. Seconded by Norah Jagers.

9. Any Other Business:

- a) Alan Bennett said that he was very impressed by the Comet Class Association, and particularly mentioned the newsletter, website and events.
- b) Diana Thompson recorded thanks to Liz for the mementoes for qualifiers.
- c) A request was made for help to design a better way of getting back into the boat after a capsiz.
- d) The Treasurer recorded his thanks to Anne Hooper (C43) for her continued interest in the Class, even though she has moved on to bigger boats.
- e) The Treasurer announced that he would not be seeking re-election at the next AGM
- f) John Regnard reminded the meeting of the rescheduled date for the meeting at Shearwater.
- g) John Dyer listed several reasons for sailing the Comet suggesting that these standard advantages could be used as a selling point..

Phil and Liz Hossell presented the Class Association with a new trophy, to be awarded annually to the person judged to have made the greatest contribution to supporting and promoting the Comet and the Comet Class Association. The first recipient, for her tireless management of "Team Coppenhall" is Sue Coppenhall.

Norah Jagers Class Secretary

EUROS OR STERLING

On Saturday 20th April, I received an email from a female called Hildegard who lives near Dusseldorf in Germany. She is the owner of Comet 238 and for about a year has sailed it on the local lake. Her problem was that she was trying to obtain a new boom pin and 'R' clip, finding it impossible to get these in Germany. "Could I assist" ?

Looking up the list received with the last Newsletter I found the cost to us is £5 post free, that is nearly 8 euros. So I telephoned Comet Dinghies on Monday 22nd and our Donna sorted out the answers: the postage to Germany would not be any extra and a Mastercard etc would be OK. I sent Hildegard an email straight away giving her all the relevant information.

At 7.23 that evening I received a reply thanking me for my efforts, she was happy to have had a reply so quickly and would do as advised.

I received a further email on Sunday 5th May saying that she was successful and was pleased to know where to get spare parts if required in future. She thanked me for my help and added: "Mast und Schotbruch (as we say in Germany)".

(Could someone out of you brainy lot tell me what that means.)

Derek Coleman (Treasurer)

● SCENES AT THE TIDALS



Hang on Richard”



Peter Hayes trying to be a submarine



The victor on a trying day!



Even the banner felt exhausted

● NEW COMPETITION IDEAS

It's taken a while but at last I have found the time to put pen to paper and contribute to Perihelion. I basically have two ideas that I would like to put to the membership for consideration. The ideas could be combined as one 'event' if both are adopted.

Accommodating the non-racing fraternity of Comet owners.

Last August (2001) I was enjoying some sailing at Saundersfoot with my club, Severn Sailing Club, when on the final evening I found myself sailing out far enough to see Caldey Island in its entirety, un-obstructed by the mainland, and felt drawn to circumnavigating the island. This would not have been wise as I was sailing solo and without a rescue boat. I enquired at Saundersfoot Sailing Club and discovered that they do indeed race on occasion around the island and the Comets in the club are the smallest craft allowed to participate. I then thought how enjoyable it would be to sail around the island with a fleet of Comets, not racing but a sail followed by a social gathering in a local pub. An attractive (say A5) certificate could be produced to commemorate a complete circumnavigation of the island as a keepsake for participants. For some of us getting round would represent a challenge and the certificate would represent a trophy for completing a personal challenge.

If the more competitive members wanted to race round we could organise two starts with the non-racers staying well away from the start line, even on the beach, then taking their time to pass through the line simply to register their intention to sail round (for safety reasons). (That's a similar principle to the London Marathon isn't it, but without the sponsorship. Editor).

Tailender's trophy

The possible racing element leads me to my second idea. At Severn Sailing Club we run a Tailender's trophy. To be eligible to enter the helm must not have gained a first place in any race throughout the present or previous season's racing (including a first in the Tailender's trophy the previous season). My idea therefore is to 'borrow' the idea for Comet sailors. A single race could be run which is open to Comet sailors who have not won a trophy, for example, in the present or previous season's racing.

Such a race (or races) would ideally take place either at the above (possibly involving three starts, the second start being for eligible Tailender's?) or even better would be an end-of-season combined race training and Tailender's trophy. Thus a training session could be concluded with the Tailender's Trophy which

could then be (say) 3 back-to-back short races (possibly of just 1 or 2 laps) making it more of an event.

If sailors wish to attend the training but are not eligible to sail in the race, they could help the trainer in organising the race(s). The eligibility criteria would need careful consideration and may, for example, require some sort of participation in other Comet events to prevent non-Comet sailors entering as a one-off! but being careful not to exclude those new Comet sailors who have not been ready to enter opens etc.

I would be interested in any comments re these ideas.
(Email: clanig3@hotmail.com)

Nigel Boarder Comet 344
(occasionally seen following fleets of Comets at opens)

EDITOR'S NOTES

After my chiding last time, you certainly did "do better"! We have three meeting reports, and as you see two of them are quite long. I have not cut them down because they are written well and non-travellers can easily imagine being there. Thanks to the authors, Tony Reeve (Taplow Lake meeting) and Simon Govier (Association championships at Hampton). Thanks too to John Edwards, a shorter report yes, but perhaps this reflects taking part in the racing, or perhaps a genuinely less exciting meeting.

Then there are the two articles from Nigel Boarder and Derek Coleman, Nigel on other kinds of competition than the customary non-handicap "round the cans" racing and Derek on the value of the Internet in serving Comet sailing abroad. Thanks to you both.

Please note three changes involving Committee members, all quite important:

Ros Stevenson has a new telephone number: **01606-591695**, note this for the Nationals.

Nick Warren has a new address and telephone number: **01189 773110**, note this for the Littleton Open meeting.

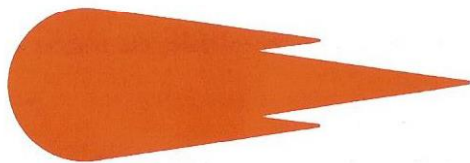
Paul Hinde has successfully taken over the collation of results from Phil Hossell but has been hampered by the fact that his house number has been incorrect in previous Perihelions. This should be **116**, not 16. Note this for sending in meeting results.

Thanks too to those who have sent in photographs: Andrew Simmons for the cover and two on page 28, John Edwards for two at Chester and Henry Jagers for those on pages 4 and 29.

E-mail. I have had trouble this time picking up contributions via email. Apologies to those who have had to send things by post. John Edwards' photos came to me through the post on floppy disc, a very safe way of doing it. If you want to send an email please give me a ring. What I need is WORD version 6 or 7 or EXCEL version 7. I have been able to read pictures in JPEG format, but not always.

The "Notices" refer to the new "Dinghy Sailing Magazine". In the first issue there were no less than 14 second-hand Comets for sale! This must be a welcome addition to advertisement opportunity for those wishing to buy or sell Comets.

Alan Browning, Editor



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association