

Comet Class Association Newsletter

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 70 SPRING 2004

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Chairman's Report

Ready or not, the new season begins!

Thanks to Norah's hard work we have a bumper racing programme just waiting for you to enjoy and, as usual, we are looking forward to being at many of the events ourselves. Please give us your support.

The first open meeting is in mid April at Shearwater. We always have a good day there and blow away a few of the winter cobwebs. That's followed by Fishers Green and a welcome return to Sutton Bingham. May looks very busy indeed with 5 opens leading up to the 2004 National Championships over the spring bank holiday. By popular request the Nationals are on Rutland Water and at a very reasonable cost, especially for such a prestigious venue. It really is an easily accessible and lovely part of the country and a very large but interesting water. Good facilities and easy launching, too: more information elsewhere in this issue.

Another event to mark now is the Association Championship on August bank holiday weekend. This will be at Hampton Pier YC, Herne Bay, a venue we have used successfully several times before. For a summer weekend away at an old fashioned seaside resort it can't be beaten! In fact both Championship venues should suit sailors and families alike so bring your supporters with you and make a holiday of it.

Also on the programme, I must give a mention to Mudeford in August, our only tidal venue this year apart from the Association Championships. Delightful sailing in the large, sheltered, and shallow confines of Christchurch harbour. This year we are making it a floating (!) or "Joker" event which you can count towards any Aphelion area of your choice. Just let Paul Hinde know which one before 19th September.

In October we have a new venue: Burghfield SC near Reading. This is a well-known club with a fine clubhouse and large water just by the M4. Come and check it out! You will find the full programme for the year later on and a programme card for your wallet.

We went to the London Boat Show and can report that the new venue at Excel is pretty good. Perhaps not as much character as Earls Court but lots more room, reasonably priced parking, easier to get to and a large expanse of water to sail on. The Association was invited to take part in the "50th Anniversary London Boat Show British Marine Federation Sail-past" which was on Victoria Dock on the last Sunday. The aim was to get 40 different classes of sailing dinghy on the water which I think they achieved. Although why 40 and not 50 for the 50th anniversary I couldn't say! Derek Coleman offered

to take his boat there and Richard Smallwood came and helped him, taking turns with the sailing. It was a lovely sunny day for early January and we got some good pictures. Many thanks to both of them.

Thanks, too, to everyone who helped man our stand at the NEC Boat Caravan and Leisure Show. We had our usual exhibit in the RYA area and hopefully influenced a few people to get on, or back on, the water: perhaps even persuading a few into Comets! Special thanks to Alan (and Pauline) Bennett who found and organised the volunteers as well as spending a day on the stand themselves. The Dinghy Sailing Show at Alexandra Palace is our next outing, but that will be long past by the time you read this.

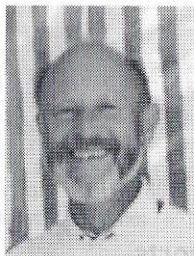
Don't forget this year's Photographic Competition, entries please by the 16th October. Same as last year, the categories are "Comets on the Water" and "Comet People". Entries can be sent to me or to the Editor, either hard copy, on disk, or as email attachments. For the latter, I can accept almost any file format but at good resolution, please, so we can make a quality print (most modern digital cameras are fine or if you are scanning a 6" x 4" print use 150dpi minimum, preferably 300dpi). However, if emailing me lots of large files perhaps you could give prior warning!

Our AGM will be on Sunday 30th May and you will find the notice of meeting and provisional agenda, a nomination form, and minutes of last year's meeting with this issue. Remember, it's **your** association so do come and take part. AGMs really aren't as long or as boring as you might think they are!

I anticipate another splendid year for the Comet and, whereas my participation will be almost exclusively racing, I know that many of you get a lot of pleasure from cruising or casual sailing of one sort and another. We would like to hear from you and are looking forward to reading about some of your ideas and adventures in Perihelion. Our Editor will be grateful to receive your contributions.

And finally, if this is someone else's copy you are reading then you probably haven't paid your subs. Do it now and keep our Treasurer happy!

Good Sailing,
Henry Jagers



Notes from your Committee :

1. The programme of events for 2004 has been finalised, and you will find - thanks to Henry's hard work - a credit card sized version with this edition of Perihelion.

2. **PLEASE** remember to check before you travel to any event. You will find a contact name for every event. Some clubs (eg. Pingewood/Kennet Valley) ask to know numbers for catering in advance.

3. We're very pleased to be returning to Sutton Bingham for an Open meeting after a year's absence. For those of you who haven't sailed there, do make the effort this year. The meeting is on Sunday 25th April, the day after Fishers Green, so an ideal opportunity for a weekend away!

4. Our new venue for 2004 is Burghfield, which is situated by the M4 at Reading. It's a large gravel pit with the usual interesting wind variations. Although there are not many Comets at the club many of you will know Chris Robinson with "Yellow Peril" (C63). Andrew Simmons uses Burghfield for his demo days. The club house is well appointed, and hopefully Sue still makes a mean bacon roll.

5. As suggested we have arranged for a "floating" event which can count towards any of the Aphelions. It isn't practical to use Burghfield as it is too late in the season. We have therefore decided to nominate Mudeford as our "**Joker Event**". This year Mudeford is our only salt water meeting, and the Open meeting will be held during Mudeford week. **SO** all of you who take part in the Mudeford meeting and the one at your own club, will only have to go to one other event in order to qualify for one of the Aphelions.

6. In order to use your results from Mudeford, you will need to nominate the Aphelion of your choice by **Sunday 19th September**. You do that by contacting **Paul Hinde**.



Norah Jagers
Class Secretary

7. Staunton Harold has kindly offered to host the Association Championships in 2005. We hope to finalise the date shortly, once I have confirmed the venue and date for the National Championships.

8. Thank you to Derek Coleman and Richard Smallwood who joined the "Sail Past" at the Boat Show. It was a wonderful opportunity to show the Comet to a huge audience.

9. Thank you too to everyone who has done a stint at the NEC. It isn't the easiest of stands to cover, mainly because the majority of the show-goers are not sailors. But we know from past experience that people have bought Comets after seeing them at Birmingham. And this is our opportunity to encourage new people to take an interest in sailing.

10. You will find an entry form for the **Nationals** with this edition of Perihelion. Please complete it and bring it with you - entries will be taken on the day. You should make cheques out to "Comet Class Association". The entry fee will be £25.00.

11. Your **Annual General Meeting** will be held at Rutland Water, during the National Championships, on Sunday 30th May 2004. The meeting will start at 18.30 or one hour after the end of the last race, whichever is the later. You will find an invitation and provisional agenda with this copy of Perihelion.

12. If you want to put forward a motion for consideration by members at the AGM, please send them to me by May 2nd. They should be proposed and seconded by full members of the association.

13. Although the current members of the committee are prepared to stand again, we will be very happy to welcome anyone who would like to help with the running of the Association. So, if you fancy "having a go", fill in the enclosed proposal form and send it to me - or bring it along on the day.

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

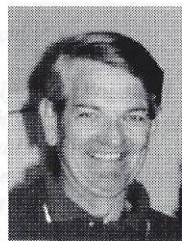
PERIOD - 1 JANUARY 2003 TO 31 DECEMBER 2003

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
		£	£
MEMBERSHIP FEES	1	2484.00	2226.00
FROM COMET DINGHIES (NEW BOATS)	2	108.00	36.00
NATIONAL AND INLAND CHAMPS. REVENUE	3	565.00	1012.50
INSURANCE COMMISSION	4	1091.00	938.00
BUILDING SOCIETY INTEREST (NATIONWIDE AC NOW CLOSED)		11.80	0
BUILDING SOCIETY INTEREST (PORTMAN)	5	8.94	77.85
WEBSITE DONATIONS FOR ADVERTISEMENTS	6	105.00	123.00
DONATIONS AND SALES	7	<u>25.00</u>	<u>27.50</u>
	Totals	<u>4398.74</u>	<u>4440.85</u>
<u>PAYMENTS</u>			
PRIZES AND ENGRAVING		1075.16	1191.97
PERIHELION AND EDITOR'S COSTS		1337.96	1253.23
EXHIBITION AND ELECTRICAL CHARGES	8	559.38	0
RYA AFFILIATION FEE		66.00	67.00
ADVERTISING		350.16	359.56
EXPENSES (INC. PETTY CASH: £55.60)	9	247.49	128.59
ADHESIVE LABELS		9.00	9.00
NATIONAL AND INLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS	3	79.50	772.50
WEBSITE COSTS	10	<u>21.14</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total	<u>3785.79</u>	<u>3781.85</u>
TOTAL INCOME 2003	4440.85	BALANCE IN B/SOC 31.12.03	3424.79
TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2003	<u>3781.85</u>	BALANCE IN BANK 31.12.03	131.36
SURPLUS / DEFECIT	<u>659.00</u>	PETTY CASH ON 31.12.03	<u>0.50</u>
		Total	<u>3556.65</u>
		BALANCE IN B/SOC 31.12.02	2808.94
		BALANCE IN BANK 31.12.02	64.61
		PETTY CASH ON 31.12.02	<u>24.10</u>
		Total	<u>2877.65</u>
		DIFFERENCE (SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR)	<u>659.00</u>

Richard Smallwood Date 26.1.04
Hon Treasurer

W John Edwards Date 28.1.04
Hon Auditor

NOTES



1. MEMBERSHIP. Down from 213 in 2002 to 207 in 2003. There were 145 individual renewals, 36 new members with old boats, 3 new members with new boats, 3 "family" renewals, 18 new members carried over from late 2002 and 2 hon. members. This generated $145 + 36 + 3 = 184 \times \pounds 12 = \pounds 2208$; $3 \times \pounds 18 = \pounds 54$; total $\pounds 2262$
 2. NEW BOATS. Only 3 in 2003!
 3. NAT. CHAMPS. There were 24 entries at the Association Championships at Rutland and 40 at the Nationals at Portland Sailing Academy. Some entry fees for both events were processed through the Association's accounts, hence higher figures in both "Receipts" and "Payments" in 2003.
 4. INSURANCE COMMISSION. Down from 2002
 5. B/S INTEREST. A nice bonus from Portman Building Society in 2003
 6. WEBSITE DONATIONS. A further rise in 2003; only non-members of the Association are asked for a donation when we advertise their Comets on the Website.
 7. DONATIONS & SALES. In 2003 this is all from sales of T-shirts etc..
 8. EXHIBITIONS. The 2002 figure of $\pounds 599.38$ covered all charges for Sailboat 2002 and NEC plus $\pounds 118$ paid in advance for Sailboat 2003. Although nothing was paid out in 2003, a total of $\pounds 2.65.00$ was paid out in connection with exhibitions in January 2004. In previous years these payments were made in December.
 9. EXPENSES. 2003 figure includes a gift to Alan Browning, retiring Editor of Perihelion.
 10. WEBSITE. No costs in 2003
- All in all a satisfactory year with an surplus for the year of $\pounds 659.00$ but this must be reduced by $\pounds 265.00$ (see Note 8 above) making a more realistic surplus of $\pounds 394.00$.

Richard Smallwood
Hon Treasurer

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy on Sunday 24th August 2003

The meeting was attended by 30 members of the Association and the builder

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from: Keith Lamdin, Nick Warren, Keith Appleby, N.G. Carling, Tony Harrison, Dave Harris, Nigel Moon, Daniel Moon, Nigel Fern, Chris Hawley, Steve Hawley, Roger Lemmon, Steve Lemmon, Jenny Lemmon, Phil Waters, Annette Waters, Nancy Gould, Stu Meese, James Wilkins, Mark Wilkins.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 25th August 2002:

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed and signed. Proposed by Simon Thompson. Seconded by John Copenhall.

3. Reports by Officers:

The Chairman, Henry Jagers, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He hoped that everyone was enjoying the sailing as much as he was, and commented that, with no apologies to the non-racing and cruising fraternity, this was what sailing was all about! He said that, as last year, he had not been able to attend quite as many events as he would have liked to do, but noted the excellent standard of sailing wherever he had been.

Henry went on to thank all of the committee members, who have worked hard and productively on our behalf over the past year. Again **Paul** and **Nick** were instrumental in making our representation at the NEC and Sailboat shows possible and effective. **Ros** had done well on the trophy side, and once again she had obtained some sponsorship towards the mementoes and prizes for the Nationals, this time from **RWO**. **Richard** was settling in nicely as Treasurer, and, as usual, **Norah** had kept the show on the road. Henry thanked **John Edwards** for his work as Auditor

Henry explained that the meeting marked the end of an era in some respects, with the retirement of **Alan Browning** as Newsletter Editor. Alan had worked wonders in developing our quarterly magazine from a few typewritten sheets to the much larger and well presented publication which it is today. So far, no-one has come forward to replace him.

Henry said that there might also be a change in Webmaster in the near future as **Tony**, who has done so well for us, feels that he may not be able to offer as much time, because of other commitments.

The Secretary, Norah Jagers, thanked all the clubs which have hosted meetings this year. She regretted that Frensham Pond had decided not to hold Comet Open meeting, it had not been possible to agree a date with Sutton Bingham. She has agreed with Sutton Bingham that we will look at a suitable date early on next year. One of the difficulties has been that May is a very popular month. The main change this year has been extension of the season, with Shearwater being 2 weeks earlier than usual, and Staunton Harold deciding on a meeting a week later than Kingsmead. Norah reported that May is likely to be even more busy next year as the Nationals will be at Rutland over the late May Bank Holiday. She acknowledged that there have been some criticism of the organisation at Rutland, although the main verdict of the Association Championships this year was

that it offered very good sailing. Hampton Pier has offered to host the 2004 Association Championships – dates to be confirmed.

Norah said that finding venues for the national events is becoming increasingly difficult. Winsford Flash had done a magnificent job in hosting the 2002 Nationals, and would vouch for the amount of dedication and hard work required from a large number of people. "Ordinary" sailing clubs are becoming increasingly reluctant to disadvantage their members by hosting 3 day events, especially where they don't have an active (and, sadly, that usually means "racing") Comet fleet. Any suggestions for future venues – for the Nationals and Association Championships – will be gratefully received.

In terms of the Open events, it has been suggested that we experiment with one or two "wild card" meetings, your results from which can be used towards any nominated Aphelion. It was envisaged that this could apply to new venues, possibly an Open Day which was not necessarily a Comet only event. Norah ended by offering her personal thanks to Alan for his enthusiasm, and Anne for her forbearance.

The Results Officer, Paul Hinde, looked at last year's results, saying that Ian Coppenhall had been the man of the year. The average number of boats at events had been 17, with Littleton, Kingsmead and Severn having the highest attendance. Of the 172 helms who had entered events, 117 had been members of the Association.

This year, stamped addressed envelopes have been sent to Club contacts in an attempt to encourage them to end in their results. However, as more information is required, Paul is considering sending spreadsheets out next year to ensure that clubs comply.

The Webmaster, Tony Ellison, said that although he is able to keep the website ticking over, he would be happy if someone volunteered to take on the task.

The Newsletter Editor, Alan Browning, thanked members for their contributions during the year. In the four issues there were 11 reports of meetings and 5 unsolicited articles. Apart from his own photos he put in 16 from members, but of course more photos were submitted for the competition. He particularly thanked Henry and Norah Jagers for sending their regular contributions well on time, every time, and Paul Hinde for his consistently excellent presentation of the results, both meeting by meeting and the annual results and review.

Alan went on to thank Tony Ellison for his continuing first class effort running the Comet Association website. Many second-hand Comets have now been sold through it, including Alan's own. It is now routine for the list of boats for sale, and other items of an information nature, to go on to the website ahead of the distribution of Perihelion)

Alan said that although there have been no innovations in the year, he has collated a number of articles for reprinting. These include collecting together almost all that has been said about the Mino into one place, the "Mino Book", and reprints of two leaflets "Zero Maintenance - - - But" by Barrie Hylton and "Keeping your Comet looking young" by Andrew Simmons. The masters of all these are with the Committee.

Alan's experimental "Rivals Competition" has continued to be encouraging, even though it is a competition only in the imagination. He reminded the meeting that this started because of an article in Perihelion 40 by an anonymous member, "Old and Fat", who asked that something be done to improve the competition for less skilled members of the fleet. Alan hoped that the new Committee will be more creative on this topic than the present one has been.

When looking back over 10 years and 40 issues of Perihelion, Alan apologised for his mistakes, there has been at least one error in every issue!

Alan said that he has initiated a number of new features, in particular, by introducing the "First Six" results for all open meetings and full results for the two championships. He has relegated Open Meeting flyers to loose inserts, but allowed them for Championships, and has printed open meeting location maps with lists of grid references and, for clubs new to open meetings, articles introducing them. Because he found members repeatedly expressing concern over some problems of sailing technique, he requested articles on these problems from our best sailors. At the suggestion of others, he reported on interviews with a wide variety of members and began the Mi-notes series.

Over the ten years photographs have become much more a part of the Newsletter, but this is not his influence, more an increase in interest of members in photography and perhaps too an improvement in the quality of the printing process.

Because new members are joining all the time, Alan felt it important to keep available articles that could be helpful in sailing, racing and maintaining the Comet. It was quite a labour but he has produced 7 booklets of reprints and two leaflets to date. The most important of these are the two booklets by Keith Lamdin on sailing and racing the Comet, the existence of which tipped the balance for me to buy a Comet.

Looking to the future, Alan said that he has done his best to ensure that the booklets of reprints of Perihelion articles will still be available to members in the future. The Committee is considering how this is best done. There is enough material for two more booklets of reprints of the "Talking to - - -" article which he commends to the future Committee.

Alan emphasised that the Newsletter is for members and it is more interesting if members air their views and send in ideas in short articles. If no articles come in, the Editor is tempted to fill in with something. Otherwise the Newsletter will become merely a Chairman's report, Committee information and lists of events and results. There is of course room for contributions from members who do not race but sail their Comets for fun. The Committee has always been keen to encourage this, but not much has been forthcoming. Whether Perihelion should cater for more than one Comet class is still under discussion.

The Committee have been considering whether the printed version of Perihelion should change considering the success of the website and the possibility of direct transmission by email. These considerations have extended to the booklets of reprints. I personally think that printed paper versions are very convenient to refer to, but a sub-committee is looking into it.

Finally Alan wished the new Editor well, It seems to him that the main innovation now required for the Newsletter is to get the best balance between paper printing and electronic dissemination of information.

Alan asked members to claim from him any photographs and disks belonging to them.

4. Builder's Report:

Andrew said that 2002 had been a tough year. The "Race" had not taken off and all the dinghies were going through a bad phase. He had launched the "Versa" at the Boat Show, which marked a turn around, and things began to take off after the Southampton Boat Show.

He is now building the Duo to order, and has a number of orders for Trios. Andrew said that there are now 15 Trios at Exe SC and that he will be delivering a number to Carsington and Ogsten. He is building about 6 Comets a year, and had one on display at the Boat Show this year. Only 1 Mino rig has been requested in the past year.

Andrew apologised for any delays in sending out spare parts, which was the result of a lack of office staff. He concluded by saying that he was looking forward to exhibiting at the 2004 London Boat Show in it's new venue, ExCel.

5. Adoption of Accounts:

The Treasurer spoke to the accounts, which were published in *Perihelion* 67, and which were adopted by the meeting. Proposed by Paul Hinde. Seconded by Alan Bennett.

6. Consideration of Motions:

There were no motions for consideration.

7. Election of Officers and Committee:

Alan Browning resigned as Newsletter Editor after 10 years.

The rest of the Committee was prepared to stand for a further year. They were proposed by Diana Thompson, seconded by John Windibank, and were elected en bloc.

The Committee is:

Chairman:	Henry Jagers	
Treasurer:	Richard Smallwood	
Secretary:	Norah Jagers	
Committee:	Paul Hinde	(Results)
	Nick Warren	
	Ros Stevenson	(Trophies)
	Derek Coleman	

8. Appointment of Auditor:

John Edwards was appointed as Auditor. Proposed by Richard Smallwood. Seconded by Phillip Hossell.

9. Any Other Business:

- I. There was some discussion over the discard arrangements for the Nationals, which should have been set out in the sailing instructions. It was clarified that there would be 1 discard if only 5 or 6 races were sailed (see RYA Appendix A2)
- II. It was noted that there had not been many reports of events in *Yachts and Yachting*. Those which were published often had the date missing. It was explained that the host club had the responsibility of writing the report for *Yachts and Yachting*, and that dates may have been subject to editorial cuts.
- III. John Windibank reported that the Team Racing planned at Chipstead had to be abandoned because of lack of interest. It was suggested that the Association Championship could be made into a 3 day event, with the third day as a separate Team Racing event. The Championship results could be used to make up the teams.

The Secretary read a letter from the President, proposing a vote of thanks to Alan Browning. The Chairman presented Alan with a plaque and some gift vouchers in recognition of his work as Newsletter Editor. - Norah Jagers Class Secretary 21/01/04

Letter received from Keith Lamdin, President, dated 18th July 2003

Dear Norah,

Please accept my apologies for the AGM which I am unable to attend as I will be umpiring!

However, even "in absentia" I would like to propose a vote of thanks to Alan Browning for his tremendous efforts on behalf of the Class as Editor of *Perihelion* during the past ten years.

The Newsletter currently bears favourable comparison with any other class and has, due to Alan's work, improved markedly over the years and compared with earlier efforts when the Class was in it's infancy.

Alan has introduced many new and innovative features, including the interviews with Class members, articles for the beginners' level, the saga of the Mino rig, and the quirky Comet name quest. He never forgot the needs of race results and introduced the concept of comparing helms of similar ability levels over the years.

The introduction of photographs resulted in a magazine with something for everyone of which he should be proud.

Thank you, Alan, for all your work on behalf of the Class and your successor has a difficult task in following your example.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Lamdin

COMET EVENTS 2004

Date	Day	Event/Region	Venue	Contact
17-Apr	Sat	open /W	Shearwater	Nic Cross 01373 822258
24-Apr	Sat	open/E	Fishers Green	Jenny Colclough 02082 207105
25-Apr	Sun	open/W	Sutton Bingham	Gordon Parker 01458 223058
08-May	Sat	open/N	Winsford Flash	Ros Stevenson 01606 59169
08-May	Sat	open/S	Taplow	Mark Taylor 01628 602663
15-May	Sat	open/C	Banbury	Phil Henman 01926 640271
16-May	Sun	open/E	Crawley Mariners	Diana Thompson 01737 552482
22-May	Sat	open/N	Rudyard Lake	Mark Sherwin 01538 387126

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

29-May	Sat	races 1 & 2	Rutland SC	
30-May	Sun	races 3, 4 & 5; AGM		Norah Jagers 01297 20858
31-May	Mon	races 6 & 7		

06-Jun	Sun	open/N	Carsington	Keith Appleby 01332 840612
19-Jun	Sat	open/W	Redditch	David Stephens 01217 784287
20-Jun	Sun	open/S	Aylesbury	John Hynan 01494 863964
26-Jun	Sat	open/E	Chipstead	Allan Collins 01322 523529
27-Jun	Sun	open/C	Naseby	Paul Hinde 07703 654899
17-Jul	Sat	open/N	Chester	John Edwards 01829 781234
24-Jul	Sat	open/E	Redoubt	Jeff Clarke 01303 813213
01-Aug	Sun	open/Joker	Mudford	Mike Roach 01202 477553
08-Aug	Sun	open/C	Cransley	Bill Webster 01536 725918

ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

28-Aug	Sat	races 1 & 2	Hampton Pier YC	
29-Aug	Sun	races 3, 4 & 5		Simon Govier 01227 369189
30-Aug	Mon	long distance race		

04-Sep	Sat	open/C	Severn	Steve Hawley 01905 458636
05-Sep	Sun	open/W	Arden	Niall Campbell 01299 890047
25-Sep	Sat	open/S	Littleton	Nick Warren 01189 773110
26-Sep	Sun	open/W	Merthyr Tydfil	Mark Govier 02920 778459
02-Oct	Sat	open/S	Pingewood & Kennet Valley	Jason Hall 01635 579912
03-Oct	Sun	open/N	Redesmere	Tim Baker 01477 534238
09-Oct	Sat	open/S	Burghfield	Pat Forbes 01189 303604
10-Oct	Sun	open/E	Kingsmead	Ian Ayres 01784 420460
23-Oct	Sat	open/C	Staunton Harold	Nigel Fern 01530 469691

Join in the fun:- Keen but friendly Comet racing at all levels!

COMET ORBITAL & APHELIONS

Trophy series 2004

Orbital and Aphelions:

Open meeting overall results as determined by the host club, will be used after removal of the places for those helms who were not Comet Class Association members on the day of the event.

Orbital

To qualify for a position and a memento for this, our overall travellers' series, you require entry in a **minimum of six events** including open meetings from at least two of the Aphelion areas. You must also have entered either (or both) of the National or Association Championships.

Your six best overall results (from opens and championships) will be used to determine your Orbital position.

Ties will be broken by the most 1sts, 2nds, 3rds, etc. in those six best results. Ties remaining after this will be broken by the better place at the National Championships or failing that by the better place at the Association Championships. The trophy, other prizes, and mementoes will be awarded on Saturday 23rd October at Staunton Harold SC following the prize giving for that event.

Aphelions

To qualify for a position and a memento for an Aphelion, our regional travellers' series, you require entry in a **minimum of three** of the open meetings designated for the region. You may compete in any or all of the areas. Your three best overall results from a region will be counted.

Ties will be broken in favour of the helm with the most 1sts, 2nds, 3rds, etc. in their best three results. If a tie remains it will be broken by the best place nearest the end of the series.

The trophies, other prizes, and mementoes will be awarded at the final venue in each region (see below) following the prize giving for that event.

APHELION AREAS

Northern

Winsford Flash	08/05/04
Rudyard Lake	22/05/04
Carsington	06/06/04
Chester	17/07/04
Redesmere	03/10/04

Southern

Taplow	08/05/04
Aylesbury	20/06/04
Littleton	25/09/04
Pingewood	02/10/04
Burghfield	09/10/04

Central

Banbury	15/05/04
Naseby	27/06/04
Cransley	08/08/04
Severn	04/09/04
Staunton Harold	23/10/04

Western

Shearwater	17/04/04
Sutton Bingham	25/04/04
Redditch	19/06/04
Arden	05/09/04
Merthyr Tydfil	26/09/04

Eastern

Fishers Green	24/04/04
Crawley Mariners	16/05/04
Chipstead	26/06/04
Redoubt	24/07/04
Kingsmead	10/10/04

Joker event:- Mudeford 01/08/04

Your Joker result from Mudeford can be counted in any one of the Aphelions. You must nominate which one by Sunday 19th September 2004 by contacting Paul Hinde (address inside the front cover of Perihelion).

Comet Events Location Map



All the locations on the map are approximate as the map was plagiarised from Allan Brownings better software. This approximate map shows clearly the good spread of meetings available and there must be one near you. Have a good one. Editor

BUILDERS REPORT

We've just returned from a very hectic Dinghy Show. The waiting list for any new dinghy was late May before the show started. We had a good show so it's now late June.

Going back to January, London Boat Show at Excel had a bit of a slow start but came good by the end of the show with some Comets sold as well as our bigger dinghies. The new venue was really great but as always you only get the bigger dinghy companies there, namely Laser, RS, Topper, Hobie, Porter and last but not least Comet. Attendance was up almost 50% with a final total of 213,500.

We've already built as many Comets this year as the whole of last year which isn't saying much but seriously, it's looking like a good year for all the Comets. I'm determined to do a new brochure for the Comet, possibly in a large brochure for the whole range. At Rutland you may spot me in a Versa 'hove-to' taking photos.

I'm also looking forward to the August event at Hampton Pier where I'll probably race a Versa. The Comets at that club are almost exclusively Mino rigged so it will be good to see a fleet of them racing. I think the Mino rig is very important for the Comet Class. For the fun sailor, the full rig is a bit too powerful compared with the modern fun dinghies like Laser Picos, Topper Topazs and RS Fevas, but the Mino rig is easy going and good fun.



If you have Comets at your club that aren't being used much due to a loss of confidence or the growing maturity of the owner, tell them they only need a Mino sail to enjoy life on the water again! They don't even need a new mast, the standard mast can easily be shortened to Mino length. We can easily supply instructions and rivets etc. The Mino is also a great rig for juniors. OK, the 6 stoners really fly in the light winds which is somewhat annoying for the 12 stoners but they should sail a dinghy they are happy with in all winds.

Here endeth the Mino sermon.

Andy Simmons.

Time for a drink?

Wendy, on the "Wildcat" stand next to Comets at the NEC, kindly kept an eye on things for us when no-one was on duty.

One day she watched a gentleman walk slowly round the Comet, inspecting it with great intensity. Wendy went over to him and asked if she could be of any assistance. He asked what kind of craft the Comet was and seemed surprised when told that it was a sailing dinghy. Wendy was even more surprised - and not a little taken aback - when the gentleman then asked "which bit is the yard-arm?"

Wendy, being a quick thinking type, tried to explain the principle of the square-rigger, at which point his eyes glazed over and he appeared not to comprehend at all. On being asked if he had ever been in a boat, the visitor said that he has a motor cruiser.

Wendy said that the gentleman appeared to be deadly serious in his question, (and didn't appear to be under the influence of incohol). He seemed to think that, as the tiller was about 3 foot long and has an "elbow".....

How would you have answered? Suggestions to the editor please!

Norah

Peter Hayes Tells All

Ye Canny Push Your Granny off a Tram

This is a travel log of Comet 803 -

I self loader will travel.

It was after the Comet Nationals at Weymouth in 2001 that Wendy and I had a conversation on the long journey home about how to increase the amount of sailing I did and improve those all important starts. Wendy suggested that I should compete in all the Comet opens around the country. I wasn't too sure (wimping out I think is what Wendy called it). So the gauntlet of the challenge was thrown down, and we, as well as our mascot Sandy, a very lively golden coloured teddy bear of a dog started our travels.

Throughout the past two years, we have tried to avoid motorways as much as possible; and incorporate a visit to a local attraction (or even hostelry) during our weekends away. After a disappointing start at Shearwater in 2002 (13th) I began to pick up the odd top six placing. Yes, it was tiring to begin with, and so we vowed to find accommodation for journeys over 120 miles.

We quickly learnt a lot. Comet sailors do get protested as I did at Chester; and dogs can escape kidnap attempts, but the main lessons were on the water. I cannot recommend enough competing in as many different events as possible if you want to improve your

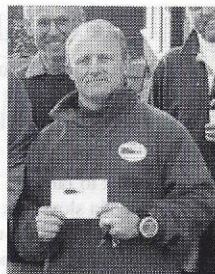


Peter at Staunton Harold 2003

starts, positioning at the marks, and of course the crucial ability to read changing windshifts. I had reached a plateau in my sailing by only sailing at my local club and a few Comet opens. It is no coincidence that the same Comet sailors seem to achieve a top six placing whatever the conditions. So, how to break into that elite group? This was the challenge that Wendy set me for the 2003 season. (Oh, teachers and their targets!). I didn't believe that I could beat the likes of John Windibank (nicknamed the Gazelle for the graceful but devastating way he passes you), Reynard the fox of Redditch (Henry) always has a different way to beat you (never take your eyes off him on the water). Brian Welham never gives up; and like a meercat is always on the lookout and then has an explosive burst of speed to disappear past you. Ian Coppenhall has of course earned his place in the hall of fame. Anyone who wants to improve their placing should watch how Ian battles back on the rare occasions that he is not up there with the leaders.

You may, by now, have realised that as well as working on my own performance I used the journeys home to analyse the sailing techniques of all the Comet helms. The result was that in 2003 I achieved my most consistent Comet sailing season since buying a Comet in 1988. My travels with my Comet have also improved my belief in myself. I have never stopped learning. After winning Redoubt in the 2002 season I managed to spectacularly lose a big lead the following year and let Simon Thompson, Mark Wilkins and Ian Coppenhall sail past me. Memories off the water are legion. Each venue has provided us with a great weekend away. We will long remember watching deer in the early morning sunlight in the New Forest before being the only people on the shores at Mudford admiring the wild horses on the opposite banking.

**Want to improve your sailing? then hit the road.
Peter Hayes Comet 803**



COMET HALL OF FAME

Championship Winners

<u>National Champion</u>	<u>Lady Champion</u>	<u>Junior Champion</u>	<u>Association Trophy</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		1989 Damon Perrin
1990 Chris Sinclair	Tracey Davies		1990 Guy Wilkins
1991 Guy Wilkins	Tracey Davies		1991 Henry Jagers
1992 Guy Wilkins	Anne Brook	Nancy Gould	1992 Guy Wilkins
1993 Guy Wilkins	Christine Stack	Jake Sutton	1993 Mark Wilkins
1994 Guy Wilkins	Christine Stack	Ian Jubb	1994 Guy Wilkins
1995 Guy Wilkins	Heidi Dodd	Robert Hamilton	1995 Alex Reeve
1996 Alex Reeve	Heidi Dodd	Andrew Bowes	1996 John Challener
1997 John Challener	Heather Back	Robert Hamilton	1997 Mark Wilkins
1998 Jake Sutton	Heidi Dodd	Robert Hamilton	1998 Mark Wilkins
1999 John Challener	Annette Walter	-	1999 Debbie Degge
2000 John Challener	Debbie Degge	Mark Coppenhall	2000 John Challener
2001 John Challener	Emma Coppenhall	Amanda Rea	2001 Ian Coppenhall
2002 Ian Coppenhall	Emma Coppenhall	Tom Raine	2002 Ian Coppenhall
2003 Dave Harris	Annette Walter	David Taw	2003 Ian Coppenha

National Orbital Trophy

1988 Craig Moffatt
1989 Andrew Pierce
1990 James Withall
1991 Henry Jagers
1992 Guy Wilkins
1993 Mark Wilkins
1994 Mark Wilkins
1995 Jake Sutton
1996 Mark Wilkins
1997 Alex Reve
1998 Phillip Hossell
1999 Mark Wilkins
2000 Henry Jagers
2001 Ian Coppenhall
2002 Ian Coppenhall
2003 Ian Coppenhall

Regional Aphelion Trophies

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>Central</u>
Mark Wilkins	Guy Wilkins	Nancy Gould		
Errol Edwards	Mark Wilkins	Mark Wilkins		
Richard Smallwood		Mark Wilkins	Jake Sutton	Mark Wilkins
Errol Edwards	Mark Wilkins	Jake Sutton	Jake Sutton	
Steve Heyes	Mark Wilkins	Alex Reeve	John Windibank	
Phillip Hossell	Alex Reeve	Mark Wilkins	Phillip Hossell	
Phillip Hossell	Phillip Hossell	Richard Smallwood		Phillip Hossell
John Edwards	Mark Wilkins	Mark Wilkins	Phillip Hossell	Phillip Hossell
Henry Jagers	Annette Walter	Brian Welham	Paul Govier	Ian Coppenhall
Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall
Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall
Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall	Ian Coppenhall

Hall Of Fame

Last year Dave Harris was our 21st National Champion and taking an overall look at the results there seems to be an article here for a blast from the past series. There isn't enough space in this edition of Perihelion to mention all the interesting facts but as you see the results split themselves into years of dominance by talented individuals, families and clubs. The new millennium heralded in the incredible achievements of the Coppenhall family. Ian and Emma started winning events in the year 2000 and their winning ways since then has been remarkable. There a exceptional team spirit from all the family with father John himself competing in 17 events last year with a string of second places and Mark is probably Ian's biggest competitor and they are all supported by the most enthusiastic man you could wish to meet. So what is the next era for comet sailing perhaps the strong competition from Severn will show itself but we will see. John Windibank 700

Sailing Away series

SMALL BOATS TO BIG BOATS

We started it all in 1989, when five of us 'Comet Sailors', decided to hire a big boat (bareboat) in the Mediterranean. Roger Allan Comet 131, Len Dean 626, Alan Gilchrist 400, Geof Kempton 401 and myself Derek Coleman 303, all booked to Turkey via Dalaman airport.

We all thought it would be a good holiday, but at the airport, there was talk that 'Sunsail' had gone bust, but fortunately they had been taken over by the time we arrived home by a world-wide company.

Since then we have had holidays afloat together in the Mediterranean either Greece or Turkey which included places like Skiathos, Kos, Bodrum Marmaris, Gocek, Kalkan. etc.

Another two holidays have been to the Caribbean, one from Martinique to Granada and the other from St. Lucia to Granada. The wind's in the right direction for the trips and there's been beautiful weather and nice warm seas. The only drudge is going to immigration and customs three times on route and they always want money.

We have had some marvellous times and we always enjoy the sailing, there have been problems with some boats but the service we have received has been second to none.

Boats have been hired from 'Sunsail', 'The Moorings' and 'Tenrag' (Brokers). This year we think its Croatia, which we are told has good winds and its somewhere we have not been yet.

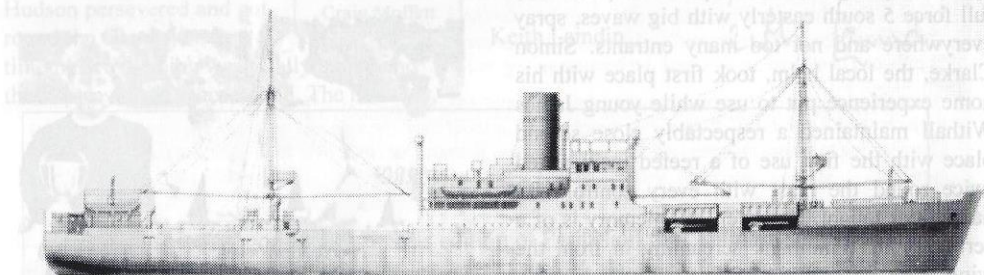


When we started it all we all sailed at Kingsmead Sailing Club and lived not far from Heathrow but now we are scattered from Suffolk to the Solent, but good friends know when we are on to a good thing and long may it continue.

Derek Coleman 303/707

Comet

Roger Johnstone has sent in the 9th Comet in the series and he assures me he has another one waiting. Roger sails Comet 696 at the West Kirby Lake and is a passed Redesmere member.



German surface raider *Komet*

Komet was the smallest of eight fast freighters converted for the German navy in World War 2 to act as disguised commerce raiders.

The 7,500-ton cargo ship was built in 1937 as the *Ems* for the North German Lloyd line. Known to the Royal Navy as "Raider B" she was armed with six 5.9 in guns, carried two seaplanes and a minelaying launch - and had a useful speed of 16 knots.

On her only raiding voyage, begun from Norway in July 1940, *Komet* sank a modest total of seven ships, including a freighter called the *Komata*. Although not as successful as her contemporaries, such as *Atlantis* and *Kormoran* (which controversially managed to sink the Australian light cruiser HMAS *Sydney*), the mere existence of *Komet* tied down warships badly needed elsewhere.

In October 1942, heading down Channel under heavy escort to start her second cruise, *Komet* was caught at night by surface forces. Her sinking was credited to MTB 236. There were no survivors.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Having read John's editorial, I thought the best way to contribute was by thinking of some of the really windy days when we first started the Open circuit!

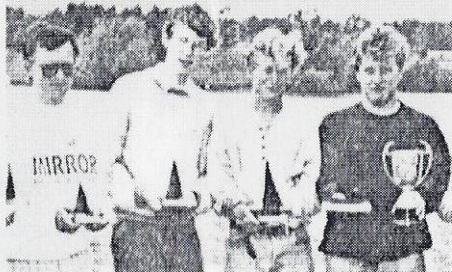
Gunfleet Sailing Club, on the East Coast at Clacton, was an early and successful venue after the first small Comet fleet was established there in the early Eighties. One Open took place in a full force 5 south easterly with big waves, spray everywhere and not too many entrants. Simon Clarke, the local helm, took first place with his home experience put to use while young James Withall maintained a respectably close second place with the first use of a reefed main rolled twice round the mast with every control line hauled bar taught. However, my memory is of a certain John Windibank screaming in from the wing mark on a broad reach and quite literally flying off the top of a wave. He soon found that the lateral surfaces only provide resistance whilst in the water and performed a spectacular wipe-out just in front of the accompanying rescue boat. It looked good from the safety of the shore, John!

A Nationals was held inland at Ardleigh shortly afterwards in the hope we would not encounter such problems again. Well, that was the idea, and on the first day it looked good as we enjoyed a pleasant and light wind day of racing. It was a shock to find on the second day that we had a southerly force six funnelling down past the club to the start line at the bottom of the lake. It was



1990 National Championship at Ardleigh Sailing Club

a planing dead run, somewhat out of control, to the start line and then a ferocious beat back up with a bank of submerged weed restricting the water on one side. After some respite under a slightly sheltered top end of the lake, it was a screaming broad reach to a slam gybe mark laid just yards from the club bank and providing great sport for the spectators.



A very young Mark Wilkins, Chris Robinson, James Withall, & Chris Sinclair at the 1990 Nationals

Anglia TV was doing a brief report on the event and no prizes for guessing where they took most of their footage. Star of the show was again James who, in the notorious "Pink Panther", showed the underwater shape of the Comet to the watching world. Served him right for choosing such a colour for his new boat

Then we went to Shoreham, courtesy of Steve Kibble and an association with Crawley Mariners, for the next Nationals. We got there early on the Saturday morning but not early

enough to be ahead of a worried looking Craig Moffett who had been perusing the sea state. Now Craig was a top standard helm with titles in the Fleetwind and Solo classes and so I thought it worthwhile listening to his views. He thought the short waterline length of the Comet compared to sea wave length and an apparent shortage of rescue boats might lead to a dangerous situation. I went up to the top of the

Coastguard tower and, after discussion with the locals, it became clear that Craig was right. We arranged with the club to race in the river and, whilst the water was smooth, the effect of wind shifts around the warehouses and the fierce ebbing tide was difficult enough. Jackie Hudson persevered and got round the course just in time before the plug was finally pulled and the slipway made inaccessible. The next day,



Craig Moffett

of course, was fine and sunny and we enjoyed excellent sea sailing in a force 3 which suited everybody, including the designer with his video. Both these windy Nationals were won by Chris Sinclair, a talented helm and nice lad from Chipstead, whom I believe went out to the States when he left the class.

Happy days!

Keith Lamdin

Editorial

There are so many good things in this edition of Perihelion that I almost don't know where to start. Derek Coleman has started us off with the first of a new series of articles I asked for, about sailing or messing about in boats and as always Derek was the first to respond. I have called the articles the 'Sailing Away Series' and in it Derek tells us about his big boat holidays.

Keith Lamdin has continued the 'Blast from the passed' series with his memories and enjoyable writing style. I didn't manage to get hold of the original photos for Keith's article, but the very young faces that pierce out of the pages opposite remind me just how long I have been sailing Comets.

The hard working officers have again produced enormous amounts of work with minutes reports and photographs and for those of us lucky enough to get to the Dinghy show the Chairman's art work on our stand was exceptional. Andrew Simmons seems very upbeat and has sent in another report and I am told he was only reminded once so what about that?

Derek and Richard's efforts at the London Boat show are well covered, Peter Hayes tells all and the Comets keep coming.

Thank you all for your contributions and I hope I will see you on the water making the best of this great sailing program that has been put together.

John Windibank

BOAT SHOW 50 YEAR SAIL PAST

The London Boat Show is 50 years old this year and has moved from Earl's Court in Central London, to the new 'Excel' Centre in the east end, on the north side of the (Redundant) Royal Victoria Docks.

As part of it's celebration and with the idea of promoting 'Sailing', UK Sailing organised a 50th anniversary 'Sail Past', by the 40 Dinghy classes (one from each class) on Sunday 18th January from 12 noon until 2.30pm launching from the Victoria Dock sailing school situated at the western end of the Victoria Docks.

Early in December our Chairman sent an e-mail to committee members on this subject and I telephoned Henry saying someone ought to represent us. Henry put my name forward as there is no time to lose and Richard Smallwood contacted me as a back up because sailing in January can be cold, icy, wet and windy.

About 38 classes turned up on a beautiful day, but there was not much wind. I did the first stint and as I got abreast of the bow of Royal Navy frigate, 'Northumberland', a shout from the adjacent walkway announced Norah and Henry trying to attract my attention, and taking photos. Richard then took over for a spell and then I did the final stint.

We both enjoyed ourselves so thank you, Henry and of course UK Sailing.

Derek Coleman (707)





Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association