

**PERIHELION**



**84**

**Autumn 2007**



**Comet Class Association  
Newsletter**

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### Information Comments Articles Results

Racing Results to Paul Hinde  
News Letter to John Windibank  
Racing rules Clinic Keith Lamdin  
Open meetings and general information to Nora Jaggars

Comet Class Association Website:- [www.cometsailing.org.uk](http://www.cometsailing.org.uk)

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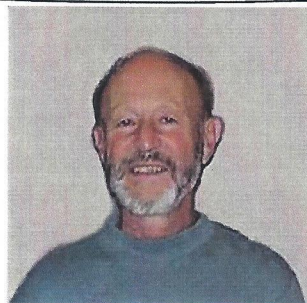
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Head & Shoulder Pictures originally : Norah Jaggars & John Windibank

## Chairman's Report

Were we lucky or unlucky with the weather we had for the Nationals?

Teignmouth is an idyllic place and it was certainly a lovely three days from the holiday-maker's point of view and much to be appreciated after the



Summer we have had, or perhaps not had, this year. But where was the wind? Despite the Race Officer's best efforts, only one race was possible on the Saturday and one on the Sunday before the wind dropped to nothing and we all had to be towed back to shore. Although still a fine warm day, Monday produced very much better winds and three good races. With Monday's wind there was also an interesting swell but nothing too arduous or worrying, even for me, just good sailing. I think all the competitors enjoyed themselves that day: with the possible exception of one who was not used to sailing a Comet in waves, even relatively friendly ones.

This year's Championships were not without some controversy arising from the inclusion of Rule 67 (disqualification by the protest committee without a hearing following observation of Rule 42 infringement). The Sailing Instructions for our championship meetings are agreed between the host

club and the Class Association and this year we were offered the services of a trained and experienced rule 42 observer for free and were happy to accept. As a fleet we have never shown

much willingness to protest each other under Rule 42 (Propulsion) even when sometimes we should. On the other hand, adverse comments are sometimes heard from spectators ashore and at times a certain amount of griping occurs amongst competitors packing up after the race. I agree that Rule 67 is a harsh one and your committee has subsequently met and agreed that for future championship events should "Rule 67" be offered by the host club and/or seems desirable to us we will not use it as such but will impose the less severe requirements of Appendix P or some variant thereof (see "Notes from the Committee"). Nevertheless, this year's Sailing Instructions were clear and Rule 67 was explained in detail to the competitors before the start of the racing.

The overall results for the Championship are still provisional as there is pending a request for redress which unfortunately, and through no fault of the protest committee, race committee or other member of the

host club, could not be heard at the time. However we awarded all the prizes which would be unaffected by any redress and all the mementoes. And we do have a National Champion - congratulations once again to Ian Coppenhall!

Many thanks to all at Teignmouth Corinthian YC for hosting this event. The occasion may not have been without problems but I have spoken to many of the competitors since and heard nothing but praise for the race officer, the friendly and efficient beach crew, and the food.

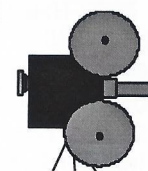
Our AGM, held as usual on the evening of the middle day of the championships, gave me the opportunity of thanking all our committee members and others for all they have done for us over the past year. In particular (and in his absence - you'll get it soon, Richard) we made a presentation to our retiring Treasurer/Membership Secretary Richard Smallwood. In addition to his Comet sailing, Richard has been very successful in a Sigma 33 and is now heavily committed to the 2.4m class and to Sailability. He has served us well as treasurer for several years, has been a valuable member of the association for much longer, and will be much missed at Comet events. The meeting elected Helen Leivers of Severn SC, Comet 724, as our new Treasurer. Welcome aboard, Helen.

And a renewed welcome to Stephen Harvey, co-opted last year as Xtra representative and elected at this year's AGM.

Since the last Perihelion I have enjoyed some excellent sailing as I hope you have: open meetings, our Nationals, and off the beach here at Beer. As I write, there are seven Comet events still to come and I hope to be at most of them. Our season will end with the presentation of awards and mementoes at Staunton Harold SC on 20<sup>th</sup> October. See you there - after we compete in the open meeting!

Stop Press! I have just heard that Keith Lamdin, our President, raced his Comet at Gunfleet SC the other day. His first race as helm since 1993 and he came 6<sup>th</sup> out of 19. Good Sailing, Henry Jaggers

### Photographic Competition



Entries, as many as you like please, to me or the Editor by the 5th October. Send as prints, files on disk or CD (scanned or direct

from digital camera), or email. (If emailing me lots of large files perhaps you could give prior warning!) Categories are :-

**"Comets on the Water"**  
**"Comet People".**

*Open to anyone!*

Henry Jaggers

## Secretary's Report

### Notes from the Committee:

1. Your Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August at Teign Corinthian Yacht Club. The attendance was lower than in some years, although a number of people sent their apologies. As this is your opportunity to comment on how the Association is run, the committee assumes that you are, on the whole, content with what is done on your behalf.
  2. Richard Smallwood resigned as Treasurer. Thank you Richard for all the work which you have done both as treasurer and as an excellent ambassador for the Association.
  3. Helen Leivers was elected as Treasurer. Helen sails 724 at Severn Sailing Club where she continues to be very involved in training newcomers to sailing, using a variety of boats. She is a very committed club member but finds time to sail at as many Comet open events as possible while running her family's engineering business at the same time. Thank you for coming forward Helen.
  4. Stephen Harvey was co-opted after the AGM last year, and represents the Xtra helms. Stephen was formally elected onto the committee at this year's AGM. Welcome Stephen.
  5. The motion from the Committee, to alter the Constitution so that the committee would be composed of 8 members (to include representatives from the Mino and Xtra fleets) with a quorum of 5, was duly passed. However, your new committee does not include a representative from the Mino fleet. We need a volunteer who can be co-opted – please get in touch with one of the committee members.
  6. Your new Committee is:

Chairman:	Henry Jagers
Secretary:	Norah Jagers
Treasurer:	Helen Leivers
Committee Members:	
	Clive Chapman (trophies) Paul Hinde (results)
	Chris Robinson Brian Herring
	Stephen Harvey (Xtra)
Hon Auditor:	John Edwards
- John Windibank continues as Newsletter Editor. He is not a member of the committee, which gives him fuller editorial freedom.
7. The other motion presented to the AGM was also adopted. This dealt with tidying up the measurement rules and a copy is enclosed with this copy of Perihelion. Please replace the copy in your Comet Handbook. You will be also able to find the new version on the website. Our thanks go to Chris Robinson who has undertaken this piece of work for us.
  8. Our National Championships at Teignmouth were attended by 28 Comets who enjoyed 3 sunny days, but no wind on two of them. As a result only 5 races were



possible instead of the 7 originally planned. Our thanks go to Teign Corinthian for hosting the event and especially to the race officer who had some difficult conditions with which to contend. Once again Ian Coppenhall proved his skill at sailing in varying conditions and we salute him as our National Champion for 2007. We have a new Lady Champion – Catherine Bellamy from Winsford Flash. Catherine is also our first ever Youth Champion – and she celebrated her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday over the weekend. Congratulations on all counts. You will find the results and reports elsewhere in the newsletter. Some of the results are provisional pending the outcome of a request for redress which could not be heard immediately. We will post the final results on the website as soon as we have them from Teign Corinthian.

9. The AGM was asked, under "Any Other Business", how the class association agrees on the sailing instructions used by clubs hosting events. For Open meetings, we accept the sailing instructions which are used by the host club, and helms competing on the circuit are used to things like scoring systems and starting sequences being different (and, in the case of scoring systems, giving differing results).

For our national events – the Association and National Championships – the Class Association agrees the sailing instructions with the host club. These instructions include a number of requirements by the association, such as number, length and format of races and scoring system to be used, and instructions which are local to the host club. Your committee has met since the AGM and agreed that in future where a host club wishes to impose Rule 67 in the sailing instructions, the Comet Class Association asks that Appendix P is used instead.

10. We have been invited to take part in the Endeavour Trophy again this year, and our new National Champion will be representing us. Good luck!

11. As the end of the sailing season comes closer, we are planning the programme for next year. We are waiting to hear if our requests for championship venues have been accepted, and hope to be able to give you due notice in Perihelion 85. However, the lower attendance at national events has made us ask if 2 Championships are viable. Your thoughts on the subject would be most welcome. Similarly, would attendances at Open events be higher if there were fewer meetings? There comes a point at which an event is no longer viable, and most years we lose at least one event for this reason. Our host clubs work hard for the association; something which isn't always recognised.

12. Please can we have your nominations for the Hossell and FATE plates before the meeting at Staunton Harold. The Hossell Plate is awarded to someone, not on the committee, who has promoted Comet sailing in general and the Comet Class Association in particular. The current holder is Alan Bennett. The FATE plate recognises Endeavour in the Face of Adversity and is currently held by Jennifer Lemmon.

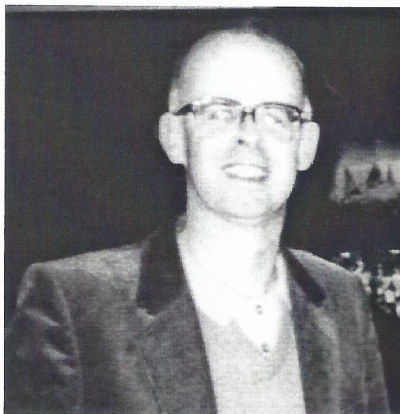
13. Most of you know Karen Symonds at Comet Dinghies. Our thoughts are with her, and her sons, following the unexpected and untimely death of her husband, Neil, a couple of weeks ago.

Norah Jagers Class Secretary

## A NEW MIND AT THE GUNFLEET

Whilst I was at the Dinghy Show in March at Alexandra Palace to collect a Mino sail and bottom mast for Orbit (C55), I got chatting to John Windibank. He said he had found the Mino rig rather tame and asked for a report on my progress — here goes!

Having struggled down to the car park with my bulky purchases and searching for my car, mislaid rather than lost, I just got everything into the Astra and wended my way slowly home which at least meant the first part of the exercise was completed!



**Keith Lamdin Class President**

Due to various colds and coughs, it was some time before I started to use the new rig and, as Andy Simmons had warned me of a potential problem with fitting an old top mast to the smaller bottom section, that was the first issue. I particularly didn't want a new top section if possible and, at first, as the top fitted into the bottom, I thought I would be lucky. However, after about an inch of overlap, the joint locked up solid and despite lubrication and wriggling would go no further.

I hadn't got the tools or expertise to free up the joint so I took the two pieces to a little machine shop in Brightlingsea where a nice old boy put the top mast into a lathe and very slowly turned it down by a few thou at a time before re-trying the joint. It seemed that the top mast had distorted over the years with a couple of high spots and once these were turned down and the joint section polished the two pieces fitted quite nicely. An added bonus is that it is now easier to fit into the old bottom mast as well!

Having fixed the mast, I now tried fitting the old boom into the gooseneck of the new bottom section and, you've guessed it, they didn't fit! The angle of opening on the mast was such that the boom jammed shortly before a position where I could insert the retaining pin. This was an easier problem to fix as a rasp and emery paper carefully applied took enough off the boom end to enable it to be inserted fully without making it too loose when used with the old bottom mast.

With the poles fixed, I could try and rig the sail at last. The mast slid through the luff sleeve easily and the first benefit was found in being much easier to lift off the ground and into the mast step. Conversely, it is a little awkward in rolling the sail around the mast in that it tends to foul at the gooseneck if you are not quite careful although this may be a symptom of the mix and match mast. I was pleased to find

that I could use my existing control systems without change although, with the shorter foot, I now tie my 2:1 outhaul off at the kicker boom strap rather than back to the mast.

The sail looked good when set on land and seemed to have a nice shape to it with a firm leech and I looked forward to sailing with it at Easter. Which was when I caught further colds and coughs from which I recovered slowly only to find the weather had gone to pot with a succession of strong winds on our exposed coast.

I have only been able to sail since July and have had a number of practice sails with my Laser buddies and am very impressed with the Mino sail. It still looks and feels very much like a Comet but there is a definite reduction in effort to sail the boat and a slower response to gusts and waves that make it a more pleasant sail for my current state of fitness and strength.

It is early days yet but the reduced power in the rig means having to sail to windward slightly more freely to punch through the chop but, although this means more distance sailed, it does no harm in tidal waters to keep the boat moving. Pinching the boat certainly caused a degree of hobby-horsing and very slow progress forward. Downwind, the boat is obviously slower than the full rig but, with practice, I think this can be improved and it seems riding the waves properly will compensate. One initial thought is that the sail is more sensitive to kicker tension and it does need less kicker downwind to avoid stalling the sail. I need more time but first impressions are good which at least justifies the cost!

Encouraged by better weather, I have had my first race this year at the Gunfleet although, in a gentle force 2/3, I opted for the full rig and, having not raced for many years, even enjoyed it. I was pleased to get a clean start and headed up the beat just behind Simon Clarke, whom some will remember sailing Comets over twenty years ago, and although I was soon over-taken by the fast boys in their Lasers, I was-pleased to be fifth at the mark and, after some rather slow reaches, sixth out of nineteen on handicap. Perhaps I'll try it again soon and in the Mino rig!

Finally, I was sorry to see in the last issue that Ralph Rowe had had to give up his Comet sailing. Without his work in the early days of the Class we wouldn't have had a stand at the old Crystal Palace venue for the Dinghy Show or the opportunity for the major open meetings at Chipstead that have been so successful. I, for one, always appreciated his support. I remember he always had a wooden strake on his boat and a Zero here also has one which came in very useful recently when, T-boned by a bigger and heavier boat, the strake took the blow without much damage and saved the hull completely — you were right, Ralph!

Keith Lamdin.

## BUILDERS REPORT SEPT. 2007

Business despite the weather has been better than last year. Starting with Comets. 9 have been sold this year, all Xtras apart from one Mino. Another Xtra went to Medway joining the one that went last year, both to oldish Wayfarer sailors and two Xtras have gone to Redsmere.

Overall since Easter last year, 16 Xtras have been sold and 29 conversion Kits, making a total of 45. I would have sold a few more standard Comets if the Xtra didn't exist, but most of those new Xtras sold would not have considered a standard Comet.

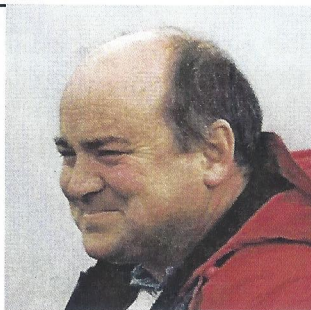
Its sad there weren't more Xtras racing at the Nationals and if there had been I might have been tempted to stay longer at the Championship.

I am going to try a bigger self- bailer in Comets, not because of faster bailing but because the bigger ones I use in Trios and Veras are so much tougher. The hole in the hull would be bigger than the plastic bailer hole so it cold be easier for people to upgrade and I will try one in a demonstrator and report back.

The Zero's have improved a bit with its smaller rig. The Trio hasn't been that great but the report in Yachts and Yachting boat test with RS Vision and Topper Xenon has given us some new publicity and at the last count there were 29 Trios at Exmouth but the Versa is still our best seller at a steady 25 a year.

The Southampton Boat Show's coming soon and we are booked at the Boat Show in January but are keeping an eye on the rival show at Earls Court.

Andrew Simmons



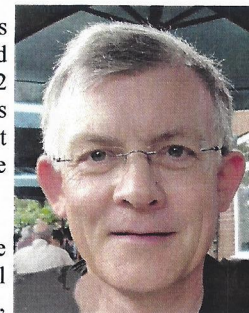
## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Nationals 2007 ~ Teignmouth (Rule 67 and all that)

Having just returned from the Nationals, I feel compelled to write to you about changes to the rules which I had not been aware of until the briefing on the first day.

The change I'm talking about is at 15.3 of the sailing instructions, which had not been sent out in advance, even though I had entered some weeks before, and I therefore didn't know about

this until just before the start of first race. In fact, the first most of us knew was when an RYA judge stood up at the briefing and told everybody that he would be out on the water looking for rule 42 breaches (illegal propulsion) and would disqualify any offenders without warning or appeal and that the first we'd know about it would be when we looked at the results. I found the apparent glee with which he delivered this message a little ominous.



Immediately following the briefing, several of us approached the judge and asked if there would be any warning of potential disqualification, as is the case in other events held by other classes, since the penalty is very severe (a disqualification that must be counted in your overall score for the event). We were informed that no warning would be given and all of our points were dismissed. We pointed out that this was likely to ruin somebody's weekend but to no avail.

Everybody who attended the Nationals knows what happened next and quite honestly it was no surprise to me when one of the competitors was disqualified. It could have been any one of us, or all of us, and was totally unfair on the person involved. The fact that this competitor didn't pack up and go home (as most of us would) says a lot about his character and I was pleased to see that he then won the next race!

The whole unfortunate business spoiled the weekend for me and, from talking to others; I know that they felt the same. I have several questions which I'd like to get answered before I consider attending another Comet Nationals:

- Who decided that this course of action should be taken?
- Was / will the membership of the Class Association be consulted on the issue?
- Was such a move really necessary & if so what evidence supports this view?
- Were there any costs involved as a result of the judge's attendance ( direct or indirect)?
- Why was there only one judge? I understand that two is more usual.
- Why did we move from a fairly relaxed position to such an extreme stance on rule 42 (why not have at least one warning before disqualification as other classes do)?
- What will happen in the future? Since only one person was disqualified, surely such action has been proved to be unnecessary (with an eagle eyed judge studying the action in all five races) and will only spoil future events. Competitors can police it themselves as has been the case in the past.

The Comet class has always been so friendly & easygoing; do we really want it to change?

Finally, the one thing I would like to see changed is the scoring for the Nationals. Historically we've had 5 out of 7 races to count, so that people can sail for just two days if they choose. I don't think this really happens any more and we'd have a much better event if only one discard were allowed. What do others think?

Mark Wilkins  
Comet 657

# COMET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2007

## Provisional Results Teignmouth Corinthian Yacht Club

Results, subject to an appeal for Redress

Sailed:5, Discards:1, To count:4, To qualify:3, Entries:28.

Rank	No	Helm	Club	Sat	Sun	Mon1	Mon2	Mon3	Total	Nett
1st	636	Ian Coppenhall	Hunts	-21	3	1	2	1	28	7
2nd	152	Alex Reeve	Taplow Lake	1	2	-6	3	3	15	9
3rd	657	Mark Wilkins	Chipstead	6	DNS	2	1	2	40	11
4th	63	Chris Robinson	Burghfield	3	7	5	6	-13	34	21
5th	427	Mark Coppenhall	Hunts	-23	13	3	4	5	48	25
6th	650	Phil Hossell	Severn	7	6	9	9	-12	43	31
7th	620	Alan Bennett	Staunton Harold	DNE	1	4	-5	4	43	38
8th	800	Henry Jagers	Beer	10	5	14	-15	11	55	40
9th	308	Dave Harris	Severn	9	12	12	-13	7	53	40
10th	812	Roger Lemmon	Severn	-20	11	13	8	9	61	41
11th	656	Steve Bellamy	Winsford Flash	-15	14	7	7	15	58	43
12th	248	Catherine Bellamy	Winsford Flash	14	-15	8	14	8	59	44
13th	687	Nick Moon	Severn	5	-25	11	19	10	70	45
14th	844	Paul Hinde	Severn	11	16	10	12	-22	71	49
15th	763	Jennifer Lemmon	Severn	DNF	9	20	16	6	80	51
16th	549	Michael Thompson	Crawley Mariners	2	21	18	17	-23	81	58
17th	532	John Coppenhall	Hunts	4	-24	16	20	19	83	59
18th	271	Daniel Moon	Severn	16	-17	15	11	17	76	59
19th	31	Jeff Smith	Crawley Marin-	12	22	DNS	10	20	93	64
20th	488	Emma Brisley	Torpoint Mosqu-	-25	10	17	24	14	90	65
21st	633	John Edwards	Chester	16	4	21	DNS	DNS	99	70
22nd	555	John Windibank	Chipstead	8	8	DNS	DNS	DNS	103	74
23rd	704	Clive Chapman	Littleton	-22	19	19	18	18	96	74
24th	205	Rhiain Bevan	Cransley	13	18	23	22	-24	100	76
25th	649	Diana Thompson	Crawley Mariners	DNF	20	24	21	16	110	81
26th	724	Helen Leivers	Severn	-24	23	22	23	21	113	89
27th	614	Carol Butcher	Hawley Lake	18	26	DNF	DNS	DNS	131	102
28th	843	Andy Simmonds		19	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS	135	106

Two races were abandoned due to lack of wind. One race is subject to appeal for redress.

First three 3 places awarded, Veteran, Lady and Youth award.

All other prizes are subject to the redress appeal

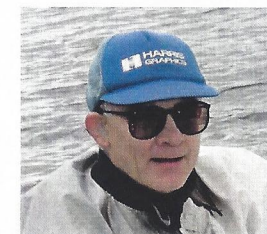
# NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2007



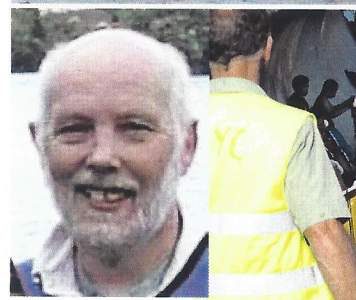
2nd Alex Reeve



1st Ian Coppenhall



3rd Mark Wilkins



Clive Chapman



Chris Robinson



Dave Harris

Catherine a few years ago

## Prize Winners

Veteran Dave Harris  
Committee Clive Chapman  
Youth & Lady Catherine Bellamy



## 2007 Comet Nationals – memories and thoughts

By Alex Reeve, Comet 152

This is my personal reminiscence of this year's Comet Nationals, with a few thoughts and ideas thrown in. Feel free to agree or ignore as you wish, but I thought it might be interesting to note them down.

If you've never been to a Comet Championship, you may not know that they are really friendly and fun. There is a competitive element of course, but any competent club sailor will find themselves up against other sailors at the same level, and everyone is there for a good time and to share a beer over tall stories afterwards. This year it was at beautiful Teignmouth in Devon, sailing off the beach.

The forecast said three knots of wind on the first day, and even that turned out to be optimistic. Blazing sunshine and drift conditions made for uncomfortable racing, and all the boats went out with bottles of water to avoid dehydration. The first race got away on time, and I thought I had gone the right way up the first beat, until two boats crossed a distance ahead of us all. The Coppenhall brothers both overtook me down the first reach, but I was still fifth. Then as the wind dropped to pretty much zero, we bobbed along the run propelled and I despondently watched another few boats edge past. As it turned out, I got lucky: the leading four rounded the last mark on to a beat, but as the next bunch headed about 25 degrees higher, and set off towards the finish line, leaving the leading four stranded far downwind of us. The lack of wind and one knot tide meant agonisingly slow progress, and to make headway I took starboard in the tiny zephyrs, and tacked back on to the long port lift in the lulls, sailing very free. This approached gradually edged me upwind and past the boats struggling against the tide, and I crossed the line just ahead of Michael Thompson for first place. I got little satisfaction from the win as the race should really have been abandoned when the shift cut off the leaders, who finished almost last some time later.

We then hung around on the water for ages until the Race Officer wisely packed it in and we went back to shore to cool down.

A contentious outcome from that race was one boat was disqualified for illegal propulsion, i.e. fanning the sail rather than relying on the wind. Everyone wants fair races, but the behaviour of the on-the-water Jury in this case was truly unfair. A proper on-the-water Jury should consist of at least two people who watch all of the races, and the most common approach is 360-degree penalty turns for transgression, only disqualifying competitors after one or two such warnings. In this case the Jury was one guy who visited the race for a short period, and the instant disqualification of one competitor. That's no way to be seen to dispense justice. Added to that, the competitor concerned is one of the least likely to break the propulsion rule, and in winds of one knot could anyone really say that they never exited even one tack faster than they went in? I hope in future we either return to self-policing or ensure that the Jury operates on a professional and even-handed basis.

That evening there was a reception and food in the Clubhouse, and much debate as you would expect.



Race two started in about five knots of breeze, and this time I led round the first mark. I went high on the reach to prevent Ian Coppenhall from rolling over me to windward, only to watch Alan Bennett and Henry Jaggars sneak through having gone low. After a tight second reach I pulled through to second on the beat behind Alan, and then sat for what seemed like about a year as the wind dropped on the long, slow run to the finish at the leeward mark. Ian went deeper and picked up a puff, but eventually I did follow Alan round for second place, just ahead of Ian.

After one abandonment and another couple of hours in the hot sun the wind never picked up, and the fleet occupied itself playing silly games until the Race Officer sent us home to the AGM and barbeque, having lost three races so far to the light wind. Still, I had a first and a second and was beginning to think it might be a good weekend despite the conditions.

The third day was much more fun. With three races scheduled and 8 to 10 knots of breeze, we had proper racing in some reasonable waves. On the first race of the day I got an OK start just to windward of Ian at the starboard end, but without the speed to roll over him I quickly started to fall into his dirty air. I was happy to tack off, and felt that with clear air and water, and able to tack back on to starboard on the next shift, I had a good chance. However, I somehow capsized on the tack, and as an experienced racing coach, I am pretty sure that is not recommended! Cursing inwardly and feeling silly, I pulled the boat back upright and got back into the race, eventually finishing sixth, while Ian won.

I observed during that race that many Comet sailors struggle with waves, being based predominantly inland. Beating through waves is a question of keeping the boat moving by getting your body movement in sync with the wave pattern. Use the tiller as gently as possible because it acts as a brake when waggled about. Instead use your body weight to direct the boat: move inboard to head up, sit further out to bear away, and lean forward to keep the bow attached to the water at the peaks. Ideally you should head up slightly as you go up the face of a wave and bear away down the back, and steer to avoid the bigger waves as much as possible. Also avoid pinching, which can easily lead to 'chopping wood' which is where the bow bangs on to every trough and you go very slowly. When you get fully in sync, the boat just seems to rollercoaster smoothly over the waves.

Downwind, the waves help because you can pick up short surfs if you time it right, and again it's about rhythm. Just ease the boat on to a broad reach as the wave arrives with a (legal) tweak on the mainsheet, and then lean forward to surf down the back of the wave for as long as you can. As the wave rolls underneath you, spin the boat back on to a run using your body weight (which can feel uncomfortable with the boom in the air, but is the best way) and then go again as the next wave arrives. It gets quite hypnotic and relaxing, and there can be a large distance between getting it right and wrong.

The next race was also abandoned – it's been a long time since I've seen so many abandoned races. The problem was that the wind veered round before the second beat, but the Race Team was unable to move the windward mark. This caused a lot of confusion, with one group, including me, fetching to the mark where it was,

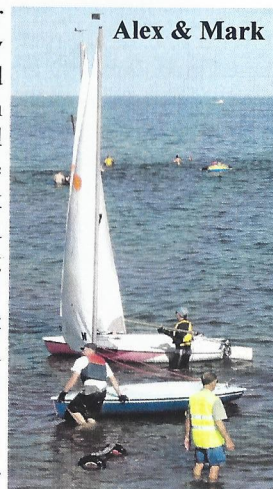
another group tacking upwind believing the mark was being moved, and another group led by Dave Harris believing the race was finishing and heading for the line! At the next start, Mark Wilkins took an early lead with Ian in second place covering me from far enough ahead that I couldn't break his cover without losing a lot of places, so I opted to cover Mark Coppenhall in fourth, while also keeping an eye on Chris Robinson and Alan Bennett who weren't far behind. We finished in pretty much the same order we started, showing the huge value of getting a good start. Many sailors leave their charge to the line too late, and end up relegated to the second row in the dirty wind and choppy water of the boats ahead. A better bet is to take up your slot early – with maybe a minute or more to go – but then you have to be able to control the boat at very low speed so that you don't cross the line too soon or incur a penalty by touching a leeward boat. Ideally, work a gap to leeward by weaving the boat at low speed, and then with a few seconds to go bear off quickly into the gap and cross the line. Also be prepared to change strategy if other boats get in the way, and sometimes you have to dive into a gap, spend some time head to wind or even reverse up a bit!

With four race winners so far, the last race came down to Ian, Mark Wilkins and me. The way the maths worked, I had to both beat Ian and be in the top few to win overall. It was no good if I beat Ian by 'doing an Ainslie' and attempting to sail him down the fleet, because if Ian and I scored badly then Mark could still win the event. Not only that, but doing an Ainslie isn't easy!

The port end of the line was slightly favoured (i.e. further upwind than the starboard end), but I wasn't sure it was by enough to cross clear ahead. If you take the port end and you're wrong, you can get buried very easily, whereas from the starboard end you can always tack off into clear air and then tack back on to starboard at the next shift. I took the safe option at the starboard end, and both Ian and Mark took the port end. Unfortunately for me, Ian crossed narrowly ahead of me and then tacked to cover, staying upwind of me for a further couple of tacks and dropping me into the pack, while Mark took the lead. Ian was in hot pursuit up the beat and overtook when Mark was undecided which gybe to choose after the windward mark. I was well behind in about ninth, but needing a top four place in the race as things stood to be second overall. On the second beat I took an early option to go left and used the clear air to pick my own shifts with decent boat speed, eventually pulling up to third: enough for runner up overall, but not to take Ian's crown.

Ian Coppenhall was a worthy winner once again, sailing consistently fast and fair, and is especially to be congratulated for winning despite scoring his discard in the opening race, which is never easy to recover from.

The excellent sailing on the last day made up for the trials of the first two. Although it had been an unusually contentious event, the good humour and positivity of the Comet sailors always shines through, and there are always smiles and stories after the racing.



# Open Meeting Reports

## Comet Open at Fishers Green Sailing Club – 28 April 2007

The prize giving is the perfect time to reflect on the day's event at any sailing regatta.

Relaxed, refreshed, tired limbs glowing we were all in good cheer. Tensions, and rivalry left out on the water we congratulated this years winners:

1<sup>st</sup> John Windibank Chipstead Sailing Club  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Coppenhall Hunts  
3<sup>rd</sup> Chris Robinson Burghfield

1<sup>st</sup> Lady Annette Walters (5<sup>th</sup> position)  
1<sup>st</sup> FGSC Mo Allen (7<sup>th</sup> position)

The elements had been gusty and fresh – 'my perfect sailing conditions' noted the winner - and who could argue as we applauded him, each one of us just that little bit green with envy, although secretly impressed.

The Comet Class is friendly and thriving. Fifteen boats from 8 different clubs launched at Fishers Green on a fine Sunday morning to enjoy the thrills and spills of alternating gusty and light airs with good weather. John Donoghue the race officer set course with superb reaches and challenging beats. A few of us succumbed to capsizing and the delights of a splash with the local wildlife, but this didn't dent our determination to continue for points and the reward of winning.

The strongest competition was at the front of fleet with the first 5 boats vying with one another in each race. Further down the fleet performance was more consistent with several competitors achieving the same position in all three races.

The results for all three races were as follows:

Pos	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3
1 <sup>st</sup>	J Windibank (555)	M Coppenhall (427)	J Windibank (555)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	M Coppenhall (427)	C Robinson (63)	M Coppenhall (427)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	C Robinson (63)	A Walters (323)	B Welham (711)

Many thanks to all of those who supported the day, from collecting the entry fee to assisting with the results, providing the teas and pulling competitors out of the water. Without you the day would not have been possible.

Karen Asci (Comet 178)

### Comets at Chester

There was an excellent turnout of 9 Comets for the Northern Area Aphelion Trophy event held on the river Dee at Chester on 14th July. With visitors travelling from Peterborough, Sheffield and Stoke on Trent, competitors were faced with testing force 3/4 variable south westerly winds which provided an entertaining days sailing for participants and spectators alike.

In the opening race Dave Jobling established an early lead from the rest of the bunch before being overtaken by Mark Coppenhall who retained his position to win the race from Jobling with John Coppenhall a close third.

To keep helms on their toes the Race Officer changed the course for the second race and put in 3 gibe marks. John Coppenhall established an early lead which was never threatened to win from Mark and Steve Bellamy.

In the final race in a strengthening wind the battle was set between John and Mark and so it turned out with numerous changes in position before John triumphed over Mark with Steve clawing his way back from a poor start to finish third.

#### Results

Pos	No	Name	Club	Points
1	523	John Coppenhall	Hunts SC	2
2	427	Mark Coppenhall	Hunts SC	3
3	735	Dave Jobling	Chester S&CC	6
4	656	Steve Bellamy	Winsford Flash SC	6
5	248	Catherine Bellamy	Winsford Flash SC	10
6	730	Brian Herring	Winsford Flash SC	11
7	330	Ian Oldfield	Chester S&CC	13
8	633	John Edwards	Chester S&CC	15
9	820	Ros Stevenson	Winsford Flash SC	20

John Edwards C633



Professional photographs of the 2007 Nationals are available to be viewed and for sale on line at :-

[www.fotoboat.com](http://www.fotoboat.com)

### Comets at Cransley Sunday 12th August 2007

Sunny but gusty conditions greeted 12 Comets to Cransley. This was a joint event with the Comet Duo and also the Heron Classes.

With Comets starting first race one was lead initially by returning past Champion Alex Reeve of Taplow SC. He was chased by Mark Coppenhall of Hunts SC and Alan Bennett of Staunton Harold SC. Alan decided to disadvantage himself by capsizing on the run dropping back to 8th place. Mark managed to overhaul Alex, meanwhile Alan sailed through the fleet and passed Alex into 2nd place after the 5 laps.

Race 2 again had Alex in the lead at 1st but both Mark and Alan got by and a very close race was had between these two with Alan just pipping mark on the line.

So it was down to the last race for the decider. Alex went out on his own and lead throughout. Mark and Alan were changing places all round the course but Mark came out on top.

Thanks to Cransley SC.

Overall Results: 1st Comet 427 Mark Coppenhall (Hunts SC) 2pts; 2nd Comet 620 Alan Bennett (Staunton Harold SC) 3pts; 3rd Comet 152 Alex Reeve (Taplow Lake SC) 4pts.

Allan Bennett

### Comet Open at Winsford Flash June 9<sup>th</sup> 2007

Fourteen Comets (one a Comet Extra) entered the Winsford Flash Open and six clubs were represented. The weather was very warm but the lack of wind made life difficult for the race officer and contestants.

Dave Jobling (N. Staffs and Chester) lead the first race throughout with Mark Coppenhall (Hunts) second and Catherine Bellamy (Winsford) third. In the second race Mark led throughout with Dave second and Catherine third again. In the final race Dave Jobling managed to hold on to win a tight contest with Mark Coppenhall and Roy Symmers (Winsford) made a late move up the fleet to take third place. This resulted in Dave Jobling winning the event, followed by Mark Coppenhall and Catherine Bellamy in second and third places. The positions in the rest of the fleet changed frequently throughout all the races.

Overall Results:

Pos	Name	Number	Club	Points
1st	Dave Jobling	735	N Staffs & Chester	2
2nd	Mark Coppenhall	427	Hunts	3
3rd	Catherine Bellamy	241	Winsford Flash	6
4th	Roy Symmers	115	Winsford Flash	9
5th	John Coppenhall	532	Hunts	9
6th	John Edwards	633	Chester	10

David Harrison

### Comets at Sandwell Valley—Sat 7th July 2007

15 Comets from as far as South Wales, Chester and Peterborough, lined up for close racing in gusty but sunny conditions.

Race one was lead for a while by Roger Lemmon, but he was eventually overtaken and came 4th. Mark Coppenhall went on to win with a good margin with Dave Jobling in 2nd and Alun Bevan 3rd.

In race 2 very close sailing took place at the front during which Mark capsized twice but still finished 3rd. Alan Bennett won this one followed by Roger.

With the overall winner to be decided in the last race there was very close competition between Mark, Alan and Dave, who finished in that order for the race and overall.

Thanks to Sandwell Valley SC.

#### Overall Results:

Pos	No.	Name	Club	Points
1st	427	Marl Coppenhall	Hunts SC	2pts
2nd	620	Alan Bennett	Staunton Harold SC	3pts
3rd	735	Dave Jobling	N Staffs & Chester SC	5pts
4th	812	Roger Lemmon	Severn SC	6pts
5th	420	Alun Bevan	Merthyr Tydfil SC	7pts.
Allan Bennett				

## FIRST SIX AT OPEN MEETINGS

### NORTH

Rudyard Lake	Winsford Flash	Chester
656 Steve Bellamy	735 Dave Jobling	532 John Coppenhall
620 Alan Bennett	427 Mark Coppenhall	427 Mark Coppenhall
427 Mark Coppenhall	248 Catherine Bellamy	735 Dave Jobling
532 John Coppenhall	532 John Coppenhall	656 Steve Bellamy
780 Peter Mountford	633 John Edwards	248 Catherine Bellamy
730 Brian Herring	656 Steve Bellamy	730 Brian Herring
Att: 8 & 2 Xtra's	Att: 13 & 1 Xtra	Att: 9

### EAST

Fishers Green	Hampton Pier	Chipstead
555 John Windibank	555 John Windibank	657 Mark Wilkins
427 Mark Coppenhall	704 Clive Chapman	555 John Windibank
63 Chris Robinson		323 Annette Walters
711 Brian Welham	Xtra	711 Brian Welham
323 Annette Walter	400 John Sturgeon	561 Guy Wilkins
704 Clive Chapman	780 Peter Mountford	532 John Coppenhall
Att: 15	Att: 2, 2 Xtra's & 1 Mino	Att: 14 & 1 Xtra

### SOUTH

Taplow Lake	Crawley Mariners	Hampton
555 John Windibank	711 Brian Welham	711 Brian Welham
711 Brian Welham	809 Simon Thompson	532 John Coppenhall
801 Tony Best	532 John Coppenhall	518 Robin Ballam
323 Annette Walter	323 Annette Walter	63 Chris Robinson
518 Robin Ballam	704 Clive Chapman	800 Henry Jaggers
800 Henry Jaggers	555 John Windibank	801 Tony Best
Att: 14	Att: 15 & 1 Xtra	Att: 7

### Bexhill SOUTH

532	John Coppenhall
704	Clive Chapman
780	Peter Mountford

Att: 4

### Severn WEST

636	Ian Coppenhall
427	Mark Coppenhall
168	Stephen Lemmon
620	Alan Bennett
844	Paul Hinde
800	Henry Jaggers

Att: 22 Att: 22

### CENTRAL

Hunts	Hawley Lake	Cransley
620 Alan Bennett	532 John Coppenhall	427 Mark Coppenhall
427 Mark Coppenhall	711 Brian Welham	620 Alan Bennett
323 Annette Walter	400 John Sturgeon	152 Alex Reeve
673 Tristan Cooper	800 Henry Jaggers	800 Henry Jaggers
308 Dave Harris	518 Robin Ballam	532 John Coppenhall
812 Roger Lemmon		780 Peter Mountford
Att: 18	Att: 5	Att: 11

### WEST

Shearwater	Sandwell Valley	Mudford
711 Brian Welham	427 Mark Coppenhall	800 Henry Jaggers
597 Benjamin Palmer	620 Alan Bennett	711 Brian Welham
532 John Coppenhall	735 Dave Jobling	
800 Henry Jaggers	812 Roger Lemmon	Xtra
812 Roger Lemmon	532 John Coppenhall	780 Peter Mountford
336 S Winter	205 Rhian Bevan	400 John Sturgeon
Att: 11	Att: 14	Att: 3 & 2 Xtra's

## Comet People

### From Henry & Norah

We hope the people with the caravan and Comet who turned off the A30 towards St Austell on Saturday 4th August at about 4:30 to 5pm had a good holiday!

### From Tina Wilkins

What were you thinking John as you waited for a boat full of water to empty? "where did I put the bung"? Mark would like to compare notes as he accomplished the same feat at the Nationals.

### From Norah

Debbie Degge again. When I read about Debbie being seen at Minorca it reminded me of a conversation I had with her brother at the Redditch open meeting. He said That Debbie had won a national Golf Championship that year, what a competitor.



## Editor

I thought I would like to get my excuses in early this month so I'm sorry we are a little late but repeated computer failures have made things very difficult. Thanks for your great reports and letters the Perihelion would be nothing without you all.

I had a great sail using my new Xtra rig last Sunday on a very windy day and had a good result in a handicap race. Normally the Lasers do me on windy days but I was right in there amongst them this time. It was a sunny day and to my surprise the sail reflects the sun light and I was glad of my dark glasses. The Xtra is a very nice rig to sail and when I rigged the boat the luff sleeve zip work very well for me, I lead the halyard through my Little Hawk below the sail before tucking the ends in the pocket in the sail and this seemed to work very well.

Finally I would like to wish Richard Smallwood all the best and I will miss his company, his efficacy in all he did and most of all the great racing we had, always competitive, always neck and neck.

Good Sailing and keep the articles, letters and memories coming  
Ed.

## WANTED

### Comet Sailing Dinghy

In excellent condition. Must be complete with Full and Mino rigs and preferably a road trailer. Looking for something around the £1,000 mark. Email: [tag54@hotmail.com](mailto:tag54@hotmail.com)

### Second hand mast or boom

For Comet sailing dinghy to replace those that were stolen. Email: [Tim.Lloyd@Gifford.UK.com](mailto:Tim.Lloyd@Gifford.UK.com)

### Mino Rig

Email: [gill.pearson@virgin.net](mailto:gill.pearson@virgin.net) or Tel: 01926 492810 (Warwick)

### Daggerboard

For Comet sailing dinghy. Please contact Phil Hardcastle, [phil@flaxfield.demon.co.uk](mailto:phil@flaxfield.demon.co.uk) tel: 0774 8180832

## NOTICE BOARD

Comet Dinghies : South Molton, Devon Tel 01769 574358 Fax 01769 574358  
email [info@cometdinghies.com](mailto:info@cometdinghies.com) [www.cometdinghies.com](http://www.cometdinghies.com)

### Dates for your Diary 2006:

29-Sep	Sat	Central 'Banbury	Phil Henman	01926 640271
30-Sep	Sun	West 'Merthyr Tydfil	Mark Govier	02920 778459
6-Oct	Sat	South 'Kingsmead	Dan Goodman	02087 370778
7-Oct	Sun	North 'Redesmere	Jeff Smith	01625 525891
20-Oct	Sat	Central 'Staunton Harold	Josie Adams	01159 328182

### Photographic Competition 5th October

## COMETS FOR SALE

**Comet 346** Red hull, cream deck. Iroko rubbing strake. 16:1 rotating kicker; 4:1 downhaul; 4:1 quick-attach outhaul. Mk2 (large) grab rails; ss self-bailer. 2 Morrison sails. Well looked after. £1000 ONO .Tel. 020 8777 8650. Ralph Rowe

**Comet 290** Excellent condition, water tight hull, very smart boat in dark blue hull with silver grey decks, mast step in excellent condition. Never had any repairs. Folding trolley, good cover, foils and sail. All new ropes, dry stored. Freshwater use only - ready to go Complete with original paperwork, only 3 owners.£1150Contact Laura Honey ( South Gloucestershire)

Home 01454 260866 e-mail [honey55@btinternet.com](mailto:honey55@btinternet.com)

**Comet 475** Blue hull, silver grey deck, 2 sails one nearly new, rotating kicker, extension tiller & keel band. Top cover and Bramber galvanised combi-trailer. Garaged stored and in good condition. Located Solihull in the West Midlands. £900.00 Tel 0121 743 3471 Roy Clarke

**Comet 152** Third and second in the last two Nationals. Light blue deck, dark blue hull. Sail used a few times only, plus a spare. Racing controls. Well used but absolutely sound, no damage ever. Sailed once on the sea, otherwise inland. Cover, folding trolley, road trailer used four times. £900 ono, Bucks, delivery possible. Alex Reeve 01628 484546, [alexreeve@msn.com](mailto:alexreeve@msn.com)

**Comet 824** 2 years old, hardly been sailed, in excellent condition. Turquoise hull, white deck with hatch and praddle. Combi trailer and top cover. £2,400 ono. Location Leics, East Midlands. Tel: 0116 237 6630; email [rpullen@ntlworld.com](mailto:rpullen@ntlworld.com) (Roger)

**Comet 295** Mid blue, white deck with hatch and praddle, good condition. New tiller and topcover. Folding launching trolley, Snipe road trailer. £1,100. Location Kent. Email: [marian.clarke1@btinternet.com](mailto:marian.clarke1@btinternet.com) Tel: 01303 813213

**Comet 733** Mino rig, launching trolley and top cover. Excellent condition as little used. £1,100 ono. Location West Midlands. Contact Brandon Geary. Tel: 07768 461265  
email: [pbgrary@pbgeary.freemove.co.uk](mailto:pbgrary@pbgeary.freemove.co.uk)

**Comet 527** Complete with full and mino rigs. Light blue with Silver Grey deck, keelband, top cover, tiller and daggerboard bags plus mast and sail bags. Folding launch trolley and Hawk wind indicator. All in good condition. Located at Roadford Lake, Devon. £875. Tel: 01404 814928;  
email: [jp.benson@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:jp.benson@ukonline.co.uk)

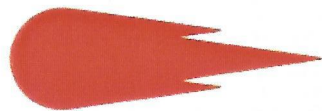
**Comet XTRA Rig** Less than a year old - used 3 times - as new. Includes mast sections. £350 ono  
Location Leics, East Midlands. Tel: 0116 237 6630; email [rpullen@ntlworld.com](mailto:rpullen@ntlworld.com) (Roger)

## Perihelion 85

Please send your contributions for the next issue of Perihelion by

**18th November 2007**

To John Windibank, Class Editor, 2 Dogwood Close  
Northfleet, Kent. DA11 8PJ email [johnwindi@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:johnwindi@blueyonder.co.uk)



## **Comet Class Association**

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association